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ΚΑΙΝΑ καὶ ΠΑΛΑΙΑ.

THINGS NEW and OLD:

OR, AN

EXPOSITION

Of the BOOK of the

REVELATION *of* JOHN *the Apoſtle.*

WHEREIN

The Senſe of the Words is brought from the *Prophets* of the *Old Teſtament* (a Method hitherto not eſſayed;) The Signification of what of that PROPHECY may be thought to be paſt, is fetch'd from Conſent of *Scriptures*, and the moſt approved *Hiſtorians* in all Ages: As to what is to come, only ſome modeſt Conjectures, upon as good Grounds as could be met with, are offered.

The Whole of the MILLENARY CONTROVERSY is diſcuſſed; Together with ſome *Queſtions* about the *preſent* and *future* State of the JEWS.

And, in the Whole,

A plain ANALYSIS of the ſeveral Parts of the PROPHECY; With a calm Examination of *former Authors*, who differ from the *preſent Thoughts.*

By Mr. JAMES ROBERTSON Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Leuchars.*

REV. i. 3.

Bleſſed is he that readeth, and they that hear the Words of this Prophecy, and keep thoſe Things that are written therein: For the Time is at Hand.

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

TO THE

KING.

SIR,

THESE Sheets, when finiſhed, were deſigned to be laid at the Feet of your ROYAL *Father*; but he having changed an earthly with a *glorious Crown*, and left your MAJESTY to poſſeſs both his *Virtues* and *Dominions*, I could not think on any other PATRON. I find alſo, that ſeveral learned *Authors*, who have treated on this Portion of Scripture, have ſought Shelter under the *Royal* Wings of BRITISH MONARCHS: Beſides, your *Royal* Anceſtors were juſtly reckoned, by the *better* Part of Mankind, to make no *inconſiderable* Part of the *Witneſſes* in *Sackcloth*. And now that GOD has

has raiſed theſe dead *Witneſſes* to Life, He has alſo graciouſly, for the *Reformed Intereſt* in *Europe*, raiſed your moſt ILLUSTRIOUS Family to the Throne of your MAJESTY's *Anceſtors*.

GOD hath *bleſſed* your MAJESTY with a PRINCESS, every Way *remarkable*, and *Praiſe-worthy*; eſpecially for her *Domeſtick* Management, which will turn to the *great Advantage* (by the *Bleſſing* of GOD) of the ROYAL Family; and a *diſcreet* and *laudable* Method of *Government*, which SHE diſcovered, when her MAJESTY was put in *Truſt* therewith: But above all, by that *hopeful* ISSUE, produced *betwixt* your MAJESTY and HER, now the *Admiration* of the *World*, and the GLORY of your *Dominions*.

That it may pleaſe GOD long to preſerve your MAJESTY, and bleſs your *Royal* PROGENY, that they may follow the Footſteps of their *Fathers*, in bringing down *Babylon* that great *Myſtery* of *Iniquity*, and to render ſucceſful your MAJESTY's *Counſels* and *Arms*, is the hearty Prayer of,

May it pleaſe your MAJESTY,

Your MAJESTY's

Moſt Faithful, Loyal, and Obedient

Subject and Servant,

JAMES ROBERTSON.

PREFACE.

IT *ſeems to be an innate* Inclination *to Mankind, to affect, and greedily deſire the Knowledge of Things to come: This is evident from the moſt ancient Monuments, either* ſacred *or* profane. *It gave Birth to the ſeveral Heatheniſh* Oracles *co-temporary with the* Iſraelites; *as alſo, afterwards to the* Grecian *and* Roman *Temples. The learned* Milton, *in his moſt excellent* Epick Poem, *inſinuates, That this* Thirſt *after the Knowledge of* Futurities, *is all that remains of a* Spirit of Prophecy, *wherewith our firſt Parents were bleſſed in a State of* Innocence. *Whatever may be ſaid for this, it ſeems to be evident* Adam *had no further Knowledge of Things to come than was* conjectural, *which is all the Length* Angels *good or bad can go without* ſpecial *Revelation: However, God himſelf,* to whom all his Works are known from the Beginning, *does not diſcourage this Appetite, but corrects the* Irregularity *thereof, tying his Creatures to expect from him the Knowledge of Things they deſire to be informed about. Thus we find the Prophet* Elijah *does challenge* Ahaziah's *Meſſengers for enquiring after the Fate of their Maſter, and ſeverely reprimands them, that they had gone to the god of* Ekron, *as if there was no God in* Iſrael, *nor any* Prophet *to enquire and declare his Mind. Beſides, we find the Lord continued to his* People *a Race of* Prophets *from the very Commencement of the* Iſraelitiſh *Kingdom to the Building and Finiſhing of the* ſecond *Temple, to whom the Lord was pleaſed to reveal the* Series *and* Order *of all After-emergents: And our* Saviour, *while in the Fleſh, did ſo far humour this* Inclination, *as to declare to his* Diſciples *and others, ſometimes* merciful, *and ſometimes* judicial *Futurities: And after his* Aſcenſion, *and the ſpreading of his* Church, *revealed an Account of all Tranſ-*

actions

actions in their due Order, that ſhould fall out from that Time to the End of the World, which I take to be the genuine Scope *of the Book of* Revelation.

This New Teſtament Prophecy *has been a great Exerciſe to Men of Learning and Piety in all* Ages *ſince; and that they have not hit the true Meaning thereof, is plain from their* jarring *Notions. The Reaſon of this may be, that the* Expoſitors *were willing to* adapt *the Senſe of this* Prophecy *to theſe* Principles *they had been trained up in, and to carry the* Interpretation *of this* Viſion *from themſelves to their* Enemies; *which ſeems to have been the Drift of the Church of* Rome *ſince their Head commenced* univerſal Biſhop. *It is alſo the* Cunning *of other Hereticks, as* Pelagians *and* Semipelagians, *ſo to order their Comments, as this Portion of Scripture ſhould not touch their* ſore *Part: Or others have* implicitly *followed the* Principles *and* Schemes *of ſuch as went before them, without giving themſelves the Trouble to examine the* Grounds *upon which they went. And finally, not a* few *underſtand this Prophecy of* particular *Churches, and endeavour to find out the* Accompliſhment *of this* Prophecy *in the ſeveral* Revolutions *their own* Churches *had undergone; whereas we are ſure that this* Revelation *concerns the* Catholick *Church in all Ages.*

It muſt be owned that this Prophecy is very obſcure (*which alſo may be another Ground of the* jarring *Thoughts of Authors*) *yet it is not more unintelligible than ſeveral of the* Old Teſtament Prophecies: *Nevertheleſs this did not deter either the* Jewiſh *or* Chriſtian Churches *to read and conſider them; and as little ſhould the* Darkneſs *of this Prophecy diſcourage us from a ſober and ſerious* Enquiry *into it; and the rather that the bleſſed* Apoſtle *doth uſe the ſame* Alluſions, Emblems *and* Phraſes *with the* Old Teſtament Prophets; *which, in my Opinion, expreſly directs us to take the* Old Teſtament Prophets *as a* Key *to the* New Teſtament Prophecy. *The Neglect of this, and ſubſtituting in their Room* Cuſtoms *and* Practices *amongſt the* Heathens, *whether ancient or modern, has betrayed learned Men to great* Blunders *in opening up theſe Viſions.*

Some are not aſhamed *directly to* flout *at, and ſpit* Contempt *upon theſe that meddle with the* Expoſition *of this Prophecy; which is an indirect* Battering *of a great Part of the Word of God. Thus Dr.* South, *in one of his Sermons, affirms, That none but a* Madman *will meddle with the* Revelation; *or, if he has* Wits *at the Beginning, before he has done they will be* cracked. *One would think this* ranting *Pulpit* Orator *ſhould have been more tender than to aſſault the* Prudentials *of his beſt Friends, who have been at great Pains about this Portion of Scripture, particularly* Grotius *and Dr.* Hammond, *whom he fails not to* compliment *and* commend *upon all Occaſions. And* Davies, *a* Welſh bombaſtick Barriſter, *has the Impudence to inſult a learned and reverend Prelate, yet alive, becauſe he conſumed* two full Years *and more on this Prophecy; and adds* (*I believe, as* truly *as the former was* diſcreetly) *that when he had* done, *and finiſhed his Eſſays, he was aſhamed to make them publick. However, none of theſe Things move me; nor do I doubt but that learned*

Man's

Man's Endeavours *may ſee the Light, to the* Shame *of his Adverſaries.*

In this Treatiſe I have wholly given up myſelf to the Direction of God in his Word, either for the Order *or* Senſe *of this Prophecy; and have not adverted to* Mede's Synchroniſms, Jurieu *his* Principles, *or the* Maxims *of our Country-man Lord* Napier: *Yet I have not refuſed their* Aſſiſtance, *when I could reconcile their* Thoughts *with the* inſpired *Writings, and the* natural Order *of this Prophecy.*

Altho' I cannot adopt Mede's Clavis, *yet I am ready to think that* many *Things in this Prophecy are* twice *treated of in the* Courſe *thereof, but they are the* ſame *and not* different *Events, as that learned Man inclines to believe; but what is more* curtly *touched at in* one *Viſion, is at greater Length* treated *of in* another.

I did deſign to premiſe to this Work *ſome few* Prolegomena *concerning the* Author *and* Time *of this Prophecy, and ſeveral* other Things *relative to them, but that I find the* Book *has ſwelled conſiderably beyond my* Expectations; *any that incline to be ſatisfied as to theſe Things, may conſult the learned* Witſius *and* Marckius. *And beſides, it would have been of* little Uſe *to ordinary Readers, for whoſe Benefit I have* chiefly *calculate this Work; not but I think that even the more* learned *Readers may reap ſome Advantage by it, particularly in that I have endeavoured to ſhew them the Neceſſity of a* free *and* diſintereſted *Way of Thinking, and that none, who would either* underſtand *or* explain *the Words of this Prophecy, ſhould* lay *themſelves under any other* Bonds *than the Old Teſtament Prophets; and to know what of it is* paſt, *to have* Recourſe *to the moſt approved Hiſtories.*

It may be expected I ſhould have acknowledged theſe learned Hiſtorians *of whom I have made ſo much Uſe, by honourably mentioning their Names. I have named* ſome *of them in the Courſe of the Book: And as for* others, *particularly the general Hiſtories of* Rome Heathen, Rome Antichriſtian, *the* Saracens, Turks, *and* Hiſtory *of the* Reformation, *theſe are all* freſh, *and in the Hands of every One that has but a* moderate Taſte *of Hiſtory; and therefore they can eaſily find whether I have done theſe learned* Gentlemen *Juſtice, or not.*

If I have at any Time gone beyond the Decorum *of Civility and good Manners (which will be but ſeldom found) I therein did Violence to my* ſettled *Reſolutions; and declare, That I had no* Ill-will *to any Perſon, whatever* Freedom *I uſe with their Principles. I advertiſe the* Reader *of one Thing more, my* valetudinary *Condition, and* Diſtance *from the* Preſs, *have ſubjected the Work to ſome ſmall* Graphical *Errors, as the tranſpoſing of Vowels, Omiſſion or Ingemination of Letters, and ſmall Words, &c. none of which will break in upon the* Senſe; *a few of the moſt notable, I intreat the* kind *Reader may correct, according to the Note of* Errata *ſubjoined to this Preface.*

It may be expected, I ſhould give ſome Account of what obliged me to ſet this Work in publick View: I love not long Apologies, *which*

either ſuppoſe a confeſſed Defect *of the Author, or a* ſly *Inſinuation upon his Reader, to decoy him to ſome* By-thoughts.

However, I ſhall give ſome ſhort Scrapes of theſe Things induced me to make this Work publick. I had gone through the ſeveral Goſpels *and* Epiſtles *by Way of* Lecture, *and coming to this* Portion *of Scripture, I found my* Audience *had a ſtrong Inclination I ſhould attempt the Explication thereof; which I did not conclude, in the general, was ſo definitive as to oblige me to engage with ſo much Difficulty: Yet, underſtanding the Inclinations of others, and theſe the moſt* Serious, *I was determined to make this* Eſſay, *for the underſtanding of this* difficult *Prophecy.* 2dly, *I find it recommended,* Chap. i. 3. *that we ſhould* read and conſider the Words of this Prophecy; *which I take to comprehend a Direction to* expound *the ſame: For, according to* Nehemiah viii. *that,* when the Law was read, *the People were made to* underſtand the Senſe thereof. 3dly, *The Solicitations of not a few* learned Miniſters, *who had either heard my Lectures, or peruſed my Papers, adviſed me to make the ſame publick, to whoſe Judgment I ſubmitted myſelf, and now the whole Work to the Judgment of the World.*

That the Peruſer of this Work may find as much Edification and Satisfaction, as it gave Pain and Exerciſe to the Author, is the ſerious Prayer of

J. R.

ERRATA.

PAge 45. Line 17. read *way of.* p. 47. l. 10. r. *Miniſtry.* p. 58. l. 41. dele *three.* p. 64. l. 36. add *be.* p. 73. l. 34. for *our,* r. *over.* p. 103. l. 1. f. *they,* r. *the.* p. 112. l. 1. r. *Preposition.* p. 119. l. 29. r. τεθλιμμενη. p. 120. l. 61. r. *at.* p 133. l. 35. r. *effect.* p. 135. l. 4. r. *to.* p. 136. l. 56. r. *Wiſdom.* p. 141. l. 41. r. *no.* p. 144. l. 49. r *Vertebra.* p. 152. l. ult. r. *Golconda.* p. 154. l. 62. r. *we.* p. 159. l. 22. r *not capable.* p. 182. l. 4. r. *a rough.* l. 10. r. *Derviſhes.* p. 183. l. 4. r. *called.* p. 190. l. 35. r. *oft in.* p. 194. l. 14. dele *not.* p. 196. l. 8. r. *puzzling.* p. 198. l. 21. r. *it.* p. 200. l. 2. dele *not.* p. 202. l. 47. f. *Kingdom,* r. *King.* p. 210. l. 40. r. *eternally.* p. 215. l. 61. r. *Enquiries.* p. 219. l. 17. r. *is.* p. 220. l. 19. r. *Senſe given be true.* ibid. l. 27. r. *them before.* p. 230. l. 27. r. ἐφεαίνεσθε. p. 232. l 60. f. 2. r. 20. p. 238. l. 1. dele *them.* p. 246. l. 16. r. *Letter.* p. 248. l. 52. r. *Exigeſis.* p. 250. l. 6. r. *Attention.* p. 251. l. 25. r. *diſcriminative.* p. 257. l. 48. f. *ſtiff'd,* r. *ſtiff.* p. 260. l. 3. r. *Prohibentor.* p. 274. l. 18. r. *after all, the.* p. 283. l. 56. r. *Pareus.* p. 284 l. 59. r. *thereof.* p. 295. l. 34. f. *a,* r. *as.* p. 297. l. 5. r. πονηρον. p. 307. l. 55. r. *Feats.* p. 331. l. 22. r. *he.* p. 334. l. 24. r. *be.* p. 336. l. 25. r. *ſeventh, Chriſtian.* p. 343. l. 41. r. *of.* p. 347. l. 13. r. *with.* p. 348. l. 29. r. *Aoriſts.* p. 357. l. 34. r. *ſecuta ſunt.* l. 35. r. *conglutinata.* p. 371. l. 14. r. *than.* p. 372. l. 45. r. *Steams.* p. 374. l. 52. r *Gordian.* p. 396. l. 27. r. *to.* l. 46. r. *Tilting.* p. 408. l. 23. r. *Clauſe.* p. 411. l. 12. r. *Chiliaſts.* p. 426. l. 29. r. *is.* p. 431. l. 5. r. *can.* p. 432. l. 59. dele *two.* p. 433. dele (*which I take for the Book of Conſcience*) p. 444. l. 7. r. *Premiſſes.* p. 446. l. 32. r. *the.* p. 448. l. 15. r. *do.* p. 449. l. 29. r. *Work.* p. 451. l. 25. r. *concerning.* p. 462. l. 33. r. *liberal.* p. 464. l. 44. r. *without.* p. 478. l. 26. r. *many.* p. 484. l. 41. r. *Accompliſhment.* p. 491. l. 36. r. *Præmonitus, præmunitus.* p. 493. l. 34. dele *to.* p. 498. l. 17. f. *at,* r. *an.*

KAINA

ΚΑΙΝΑ καὶ ΠΑΛΑΙΑ.
THINGS NEW and OLD:

OR,

An EXPOSITION of the Book of

REVELATION of JOHN *the Apoſtle.*

The general Diſpoſition of the whole Prophecy.

THAT *Method* is moſt uſeful, needs no Diſpute; for it diſpoſeth all the Parts of a Work, ſo as they may be both beautiful and profitable: Hence it is, that every Man of Senſe ſtudies it, if he would not perplex his Reader. That the Diſplays of God in his Word, are ranged in the beſt Method to anſwer their grand Deſign, is not to be doubted; for *he is the God of Order*. Yet it is humbling, to conſider how differently the *Word of Revelation* is diſpoſed, by theſe who deſign and endeavour to ſet it in its cleareſt Light; a ſure Proof they have not all hit the true Diſtribution. And the bad Influence of a wrong Method upon the Interpretation of the ſeveral Parts, is what ſhould engage every One to Caution in this Matter. The great Reaſon why ſo many blunder in their *Analyſis*, is, I conceive, this; They firſt propoſe to themſelves a Scheme of what they are to treat of; and then, to ſupport their Deſign, are obliged to preſs a great many Paſſages into their Service; and ſometimes to ſtrain a Text, that it may humour their Model. It is a good Rule in Method, *The more natural the better.* When a Man has a Deſign to favour the World with a Work of his own framing, whatever the Subject be, no Doubt he may caſt it into any Mould he pleaſeth: But, when he is tyed to a Narrative as his *Text*, the more he carries that in his View, he is like to be the better *Interpreter*; which is the Caſe here.

This Prophecy is differently divided by its ſeveral Expoſitors; as ſome into what is purely *Doctrinal*, and what is *Prophetical*. Yet, as ſhort as this is, it will not agree to the Book itſelf; for there is no Part of it purely doctrinal: It muſt be owned, that even the ſecond and third Chapters are for the moſt Part *Hiſtorical*, and in ſome Things alſo Prophetical: As for the reſt, tho' we allow it for the main to be Prophetical; yet it is to ſhare of the common Nature of all Scripture, to be *profitable for Doctrine*, &c. 2 *Tim.* 3. 16.

Others again would have the moſt Part of this to be *Hiſtorical*, and the reſt *Prophetical*: But the firſt Verſe does ſufficiently defeat this, where we are told, the Things revealed *were ſhortly to come to paſs*; and therefore a very ſmall Part of it can be *Hiſtorical*, in a proper Senſe, *i. e.* a Narrative of Things paſt; elſe I ſee not how we can have one clear Thought of the whole Book.

Others part it into ſeven diſtinct *Periods*, to ſucceed one another; and ſay, they contain all that will fall out to the Conſummation of the World: Could this be made out, it would give an helping Hand to unriddle a great many Myſteries in this obſcure Portion of Scripture. But I cannot find ſo much as one Foot-breadth of Ground, in the whole Prophecy, to ſupport it. And the *Hypotheſis* hath brought its learned Authors to wretched Shifts to rid their Feet; ſome whereof we will meet with afterwards.

Laſtly, Many take it up in ſo many Viſions: Some make them Seven, ſome more, others fewer. This, as being moſt natural, I take to be neareſt the Truth: Yet their Partitions are not ſo ſatisfying, while ſome have two or more Viſions under one common Head; and others break one Viſion into two or three, which is not ſo exact.

However, I ſhall not recede far from this *Method*: Only, I think, the beſt Way to fix the Limits betwixt *Viſion* and *Viſion*, is from the ſeveral Places where our Prophet had them; at this Rate we can make but five of them. It is alſo true, that in ſome of theſe, we will find more *Viſions* than one; And in others, we will met with the Illuſtration of what he had formerly ſeen in another Place.

The firſt of theſe Viſions *John* had in *Patmos*, more generally, which may probably ſignify the Place of his ordinary Abode, in the three firſt Chapters.

2. The next Valley of Viſion is *Heaven*, Chap. iv. 1. where he had a great many Viſions narrated, to the Beginning of *Chap.* xiii.

3. The next Theatre is the *Sand of the Sea*; where he had many Diſcoveries accounted for, to the End of *Chap.* xvi.

4. After that he was carried to the *Wilderneſs*, Chap. xvii. 3. where he continued, till he ſaw all mentioned to *Chap.* xx. 10.

5. The laſt Place is a *Mountain*; where he continued till the Revelation was finiſhed.

This *Method* is plain to every Eye, and will bring us under no Neceſſity of humouring any Model: For the reſt, we deſign to follow the Words of the Text, and illuſtrate them from Paſſages out of the Old Teſtament *Prophets*, whom we find the Apoſtle influenced for the moſt Part to write after. And therefore, in moſt of the Viſions, their Words may help us out with the Intendment of his Viſions; which, I am ſure, is more juſtifiable than the Practice of ſome, who would have the Writings of Heathen Authors uſed as a Key to this Portion of the Word of God.

The Title of this Book.

IN our Tranſlation, there is a Title prefixed, agreeable to many *Greek* Copies, *The Revelation of* John *the Divine*: The vulgar *Latin* adds the Word *Saint*. The *Syriack* Tranſlation has a more full Inſcription, *viz. The Revelation which was made by God to* John *the Evangeliſt, in the Iſle of* Patmos, *where he was impriſoned by the Emperor* Nero. And other Tranſlations have affixed other Titles, different from theſe; which to me is a concluding Argument, that the *Title* is not of Divine Authority, but was added after, according to the Conceit of the ſeveral Churches, as they received it. And this is the more evident, that it is aſſerted by many of the Ancients, that it had no other *Inſcription* at the Beginning, but the *Firſt Verſe*. And ſo we need be in no Pain about the Word *Divine*, which we have not in the firſt Verſe; for if it was added to diſtinguiſh the Author of this Piece of ſacred Writ, from the other Penmen, then it is rude and falſe, ſeeing the other *Evangeliſts* and *Apoſtles*, as well as the *Prophets* under the Old Teſtament, were no leſs under the Management of the *Spirit* of God, than he. 'Tis true, there are abundance of Reaſons adduced for this Mark of Diſtinction put upon him; as,

1. That it was, in an eminent Manner, the Province of this Apoſtle, to treat of the *Divinity* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in all his Works, and no leſs in this, than the reſt.

2. That he was honoured with the Viſions contained in this Prophecy; for, tho' the other Apoſtles gave ſome Scrapes of Futurities, yet only he gave them by Detail.

3. That he being the ſurviving Apoſtle, all the reſt having finiſhed their Courſe before, he was appointed to finiſh the Canon of the New Teſtament.

4. This Epithet was given him by the Church, to commend the Prophecy written here, to the Affections of the Lord's People; it being the laſt Part of holy Writ committed to the Church, and it containing many Things *ſingular*, not to be found in the other Writings of the Apoſtles: And beſides, it was ſome Time before it was publiſhed to the

the Churches, after all the reſt of the Canon was received. Tho' this be no very forcible Argument, yet I think it the beſt I have heard.

But, as I ſaid, the true Inſcription is what we have in the firſt Verſe, which we now haſten to conſider.

CHAP. I.

BEFORE we come to the firſt Viſion, which begins Ver. 9. we are to conſider a very ſolemn Introduction to the whole Prophecy; where we are to notice, 1. The Inſcription, to Ver. 4. 2. The Direction, to Ver. 9.

The Inſcription of the whole Book we have in the firſt Three Verſes.

1 The Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt, which God gave unto him, to ſhew unto his Servants Things which muſt ſhortly come to paſs; and he ſent and ſignified it by his Angel unto his Servant John:

2 Who bare Record of the Word of God, and of the Teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt, and of all Things that he ſaw.

3 Bleſſed is he that readeth, and they that hear the Words of this Prophecy, and keep thoſe Things that are written therein: For the Time is at Hand.

Where we have to notice, 1. The Argument or Subject of the whole Prophecy, The Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt of Things which muſt ſhortly come to paſs. 2. The Progreſs of this Revelation, from its firſt Spring, GOD, to its Publiſher, *John*. 3. The Neceſſity of conſidering this Revelation, and thereby the Advantage of this Exerciſe.

I. The Subject of this whole Book, Ver. 1. *The Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt of theſe Things which muſt ſhortly come to paſs.* In this are, 1. The general Deſignation of the Subject. 2. Its Author. 3. The Specification of the Subject. 4. The Neceſſity or Certainty thereof. 5. The Limitation of Time when they are to be fulfilled.

1. The Deſignation of the Subject of this Book, in a general Term, *Revelation*. This properly ſignifies the Diſcovery or Explaining of ſome dark or intricate Thing, whether paſt, preſent, or to come; but here we muſt reſtrict it to Things to come, and ſo to *reveal* is to *predict*, Rom. i. 19. or, in the Old Teſtament Senſe, to *propheſy* or *ſee*; and thus *Revelation* is the ſame with *Viſion*, Iſa. i. 1. *The Viſion of* Iſaiah *the Son of* Amoz, *i. e.* a Diſcovery of Things to come, made known to that Prophet: So that this Revelation is nothing elſe, but a diſcovering by Figures or emblematick Repreſentations, Things to come; and ſo, Ver. 11. *What thou ſeeſt, write*, not what theſe Things ſignify; for all the Prophets of old had Repreſentations made to them of Things to come, and that ſometimes immediately to the Mind, and ſometimes mediately to the external Senſes, by them to be conveyed to the Mind.

2. This Revelation is deſcribed to us by its Author, *Jeſus Chriſt*. Some think this to be meant of *Chriſt myſtical*, i. e. the Church, which often in Scripture is deſigned the *Body of Chriſt*; and they would have it ſo underſtood here, becauſe the great Deſign of this Prophecy points out the many various Conditions of Chriſt's Church unto the End of the World: Yet the Conſtruction of the Text will not allow us to take it in this Senſe; for it is ſuch a Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt, as God gave to him *perſonally*, and not to the Church. *John* had it not from the Angel of the Church, but from the Angel of the Mediator, and was to communicate the ſame to the Church: And ſo the Meaning is, The *Revelation* which came from Jeſus Chriſt, and concerns him.

3. The Specification of the Subject, *Things which muſt ſhortly come to paſs*. Here note, 1. The Multitude, *Things*; not a Purpoſe or Two, but many, yea, the moſt concerning Matters that can fall out, either for the *Trial* or *Triumph* of the Church, or the *Growth* or *Overthrow* of her Enemies: And, 2. The Seaſon, *to come*. This is no Hiſtory, but a Prophecy; none of them had fallen out before this Prophecy, elſe the Expreſſion could not be true, that *they were to come to paſs*.

4. We have the Neceſſity of thoſe Things coming, *they δεῖ muſt*; there are no *May-be's* here, all is faſt Work. They muſt fall out, not by a fatal or brutal Neceſſity, with which ſome are intoxicate to ſuch a Pitch as to believe every Thing muſt be aſcribed to

ineluctabile fatum, but according to the well-ordered *Decree* of a juſt, wiſe and ſovereign God, *who worketh every Thing according to the Counſel of his own Will*, Eph. i. 11.

5. The Limitation of the Time when, *ſhortly*, ταχὺς. The Meaning of this Word is not always the ſame. Sometimes it points at the *Readineſs* of an Action, when it is not interrupted: *Be ſwift to hear*, Jam. i. 19. *i. e.* Hear readily, and without Diſtraction. Sometimes it ſignifies immediately: *Riſe up quickly*, Acts xii. 7. Some do take this to be the Senſe of it here, and therefore think all that is contained in this Prophecy, was to have its Accompliſhment in the Space of a few Years after the Revelation thereof, and that it reſpects only the *Deſtruction* of *Jeruſalem*, or, at furtheſt, the Ruin of the *Roman* Heathen *Empire*. As for the firſt, we hope to make it plain, that *Jeruſalem* was deſtroyed before this *Viſion* was made to *John*; ſo that it would be ſubſtantial Nonſenſe to ſay theſe Things would come immediately to paſs, which were paſt above Twenty Years before. As to the ſecond, the moſt Part of the Things revealed here can, in no tolerable Senſe, be applied to *Rome Pagan*, nor was it poſſible for them to be accompliſhed in that ſhort Space wherein *Rome* continued after this, which was little more than 200 Years. There is another Meaning of this Word, *Shortly*, in Scripture, *viz.* to point at the Beginning of a Thing, tho' it may be long to the Finiſhing of it. *The God of Peace ſhall bruiſe* Satan *under your Feet ſhortly*, Rom. xvi. 20. We know this Promiſe began to take Effect immediately after the Apoſtle wrote to the Chriſtians at *Rome*; yet it is as certain, that ſome Centuries elapſed before *Satan*'s Temples were demoliſhed there. This I take to be the proper Senſe of the Word in this Place, and the rather, becauſe we have it repeated, *Chap.* xxii. 6. and ſo the full of it, as it lies here, is, That theſe great Matters and Emergents repreſented in a Viſion to *John*, would immediately begin, and be carried on to the End of the World. This is the more plauſible, that we are aſſured *a Thouſand Years are with God but as one Day*, Pſal. xc. 4.

II. The *next* Thing in the Introduction, is the Progreſs of this Revelation from firſt to laſt, this is the great Ground of its Credibility, *v.* 1, 2. *Which God gave unto him*, i. e. *Jeſus Chriſt, to ſhew unto his Servants; and he ſent and ſignified it by his Angel to his Servant* John, *who bare*, &c. Here we have a very fair Scheme of the Progreſs of this Revelation, ſufficient to remove all Doubts and Scruples about the Truth thereof, which we may view in its ſeveral Steps.

1. God gave this Revelation to Chriſt. If God be conſidered eſſentially, the Meaning is, The whole Trinity delivered the Knowledge and Manifeſtation of all theſe Things to Chriſt as Mediator, for the Uſe and Benefit of the Church; or, if we underſtand God perſonally, it is to be underſtood of the Father, that he did communicate theſe Things to Chriſt, both as the eternal Son, and as the Mediator between God and Man. Nor can this infer, that then Chriſt is not God, becauſe God gave them, or communicated them to him; no more than it will follow, that becauſe God the Father did, from all Eternity, communicate his Subſtance by eternal Generation, to the Son, therefore the Son is not God; for it is a received Maxim in Divinity, anent the Perſons of the glorious Trinity, that *the Manner of their Acting follows the Manner of their Exiſting, or Subſiſting*. Now, as the Son does not exiſt from himſelf, but from the Father; ſo the Son reveals not thoſe Things from himſelf, but, having received them, he reveals them from the Father. But what I take to be the moſt intire Senſe of this, is, God the Father, in the Covenant of Redemption, had committed to the Son as Mediator, the bringing about all thoſe notable Events mentioned in this Prophecy; and, for this End, *all Power in Heaven and in Earth was given unto him*, John xvii. 2. And ſo the whole Church is here deſigned his Servants. And *God gave him to be Head over all Things to the Church*, Eph. i. 22.

2. Chriſt did ſhew theſe Things unto his Servants, *i. e.* principally to his Apoſtles, and next to all his People, ſo far as concerns their Edification and Comfort. Here he is faithful to his Truſt, as he is ever in all the Pieces thereof; for, ſays he, *I gave them the Word thou gaveſt unto me*, John xvii. 8. But there is more in this Word rendred to *ſhew*, than a bare relating the Matter; for it ſignifies to diſcover to their Conviction, and to fix the Faith of it upon their Hearts. This ſounds to me, as if this Prophecy is to be underſtood to be of a Piece with at leaſt ſome of Chriſt's Sermons, which alſo it is with a Witneſs: For, who can read the 25. of *Matth.* and ſeveral other Paſſages, and not diſcern a notable Harmony betwixt them and this Prophecy? with this Difference, what was only hinted at there, is here enlarged on.

3. Step is, Chriſt *ſends his Angel to ſignify them to* John. We have Paſſages to this ſame Purpoſe, *Rev.* xxii. 6, 16. If there was a *particular* Angel employed about this Work, is too much Curioſity to enquire. All the Angels ſerve him, and he may uſe them at his Pleaſure. Some read it *Angels*, but the Matter is the ſame. What the Work of this Angel was, is remarked, to *ſignify them*, or deſcribe, or interprete. And we find this frequently mentioned in this Prophecy, eſpecially *Chap.* xvii. 7. This did not hin-

hinder Chriſt himſelf to communicate theſe Things. But the Angel's Work is to refreſh the Prophet's Memory, which otherwiſe, through the Abundance of Revelation, might have miſgiven him. This ſerves to certiorate the Truth of theſe Things here revealed, that the Miniſtry of Angels was uſed in it.

4 Step is, With whom this Revelation was lodged. This we have at Length in the Cloſe of Ver. 1. and the whole of Ver. 2. It contributes much to the Faith of a Relation, that it be made by a credible and unſuſpected Perſon; this is alſo to be found here. But we would further conſider what is ſaid of this Publiſher, in theſe few Things whereby he is deſcribed to us.

1. By his Name, *John*: It is indiſputable this is the beloved Diſciple, who wrote the Goſpel that bears his Name, and the three Epiſtles, which are alſo deſigned by him; the Stile in them all is the ſame. Nor is there any Weight in what is alledged againſt this, that in his Goſpel and Epiſtles, he is careful to conceal his Name; whereas it is often mentioned in this Book. For, 1. It is very ordinary for Prophets to name themſelves, as *Iſaiah*, *Jeremiah*, &c. And it ſeems neceſſary they ſhould do ſo, when they are foretelling Events to come, that they may remove all Ground of Suſpicion. 2. He was now a Sufferer for the Sake of Chriſt, being baniſhed to the Iſle *Patmos*; and ſo his owning his Name, is a Piece of Valour, and an Evidence of Chriſtian Magnanimity.

2. He is deſigned *the Servant of Chriſt*, the common Deſignation all the Apoſtles glory in. This is a Character alſo *Daniel* values himſelf on; and it was neceſſary both in *Daniel* and the beloved Diſciple, becauſe they were employed of God to proclaim the greateſt Emergents that were to fall out to the End of Time, and that in the ſame Order they are to be accompliſhed: And it is as it were their Letter of Credence.

3. We have him deſcribed from what he had done formerly in his great Maſter's Service: In theſe, 1. *He bare Record of the Word of God*, i. e. *of Jeſus Chriſt*, whom he often calls the *Word of God*, in his Goſpel. *I ſaw, and bare Record*, John i. 19, 34. 2. He bare Record *of the Teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt*: Where, by *Teſtimony*, we are either to underſtand the Doctrine which Chriſt taught his Diſciples, firſt by Word, and afterwards brought to their Remembrance by the Holy Spirit; or *the Teſtimony of Jeſus*, may have Reſpect to that Character given Chriſt, *v.* 5. where he is called *The faithful and true Witneſs*; i. e. who gave Evidence of his being the Son of God, and the Mediator betwixt God and Man: And ſo it is ſaid, *He witneſſed a good Confeſſion before* Pontius Pilate, 1 *Tim.* vi. 13. As alſo, it may point at the many Miracles he did, which are faithfully recorded by our Prophet. Some think it may alſo have an Eye to the *Tranſfiguration* of Chriſt, of which this *John* was honoured to be a Witneſs; or, if we pleaſe, allow this to have reſpect to all theſe, for I ſee no Inconſiſtency. 3. He bare Record *of all Things which he ſaw*; which, I think, is juſt, in other Words, what we have in his Epiſtle, *That which was from the Beginning, which we heard, which we have ſeen with our Eyes, which we have lookt upon, and which our Hands have handled of the Word of Life*, 1 John i. 1. Here it concerns the Contents of this Prophecy.

III. We have next the Neceſſity of conſidering this Prophecy, together with the Advantage of doing ſo, *v.* 3. Where we have, 1. A complex Duty. 2. A Promiſe made to the Performers. 3. A Motive to the Duty.

1. There is a complex Duty, in three Branches; 1. *To read the Words of this Prophecy.* It is recommended indefinitely, and therefore univerſally: The Act *Reading*, takes in it Attention and ſerious Conſideration; for truly the Matter requires it. 2. To *hear* the ſame: This may reſpect theſe who cannot read them themſelves, they are hereby bound to liſten to others who can. But the principal Meaning of both, is a Recommendation to Miniſters to read, and give the Meaning of it; and alſo to People to hear attentively. 3. They are *to keep thoſe Things that are written therein*, i. e. after they have believed them, conſidered and remembred them, they are to obſerve them, by living up to the Mind of the Spirit of God in them. *Bleſſed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it*, Luke xi. 28. *Be ye Doers of the Word, and not Hearers only; for if any Man be a Hearer of the Word, and not a Doer, he is like a Man beholding his natural Face in a Glaſs*, &c. *Jam.* i. 22, 23. Beſides this, I am ready to think there is here a Duty upon the Church, carefully to notice the Accompliſhment of this Prophecy, as it falls out in the ſeveral Ages of the World.

2. We have a moſt comprehenſive Promiſe made to ſuch, even *Bleſſedneſs*. This has, in its Comprehenſion, all the Happineſs we are capable of in Time, and to all Eternity; but it is only entail'd on the Performers of all the three former Duties, and not to any one of them.

Object. The Happineſs here promiſed, ſeems unattainable, ſeeing the Prophecy is ſo obſcure that none can underſtand it; and if they cannot know it, how ſhall they keep it?

Anſw. This is a graceleſs Cavil; for tho' there be many obſcure Things in this Prophecy, as there are alſo in other Places of holy Writ, yet there are very many clear and plain Truths in it; as Diſcoveries of the Perſon, Offices and Benefits of Chriſt, the Comforts of a wreſtling Church, the Patience of the Saints, the Happineſs of a delivered Church, Cautions againſt Sin and Error, the Art of living well and dying comfortably. All theſe, and many other Things, are plain in this Book; and Diligence may give, by the Bleſſing of God, Light in theſe Things that are more obſcure.

3. A Motive to the Duties, *For the Time is at Hand.* Many might flatter themſelves, that *the Viſion is for many Days to come, and the Prophecy of the Times that are far off,* Ezek. xii. 27, 28. But let them conſider and believe, God has ſaid, it is not ſo, *They ſhall not be prolonged.* The Senſe of this we gave before on *v.* 1.

Next, in the Introduction, we have the Direction, to *v.* 9.

4 John to the ſeven Churches which are in Aſia: Grace be unto you, and Peace from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the ſeven Spirits which are before his Throne;

5 And from Jeſus Chriſt, who is the faithful Witneſs, and the Firſt-begotten of the Dead, and the Prince of the Kings of the Earth: Unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our Sins in his own Blood,

6 And hath made us Kings and Prieſts unto God and his Father; to him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

7 Behold, he cometh with Clouds, and every Eye ſhall ſee him, and they alſo which pierced him, and all Kindreds of the Earth ſhall wail becauſe of him: Even ſo. Amen.

8 I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, ſaith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

In thoſe Verſes, we have, 1. A *Salutation, v.* 4. and Part of *v.* 5. 2. A *Doxology,* to the Cloſe of the 8.

I. We have the Prophet's Salutation; where we have to view, 1. Whom he Addreſſes. 2. What is his Salutation 3. Whence it is to flow.

1. Whom our Prophet ſalutes, the *ſeven Churches* of *Aſia*; where are to be conſidered theſe few Things ſaid anent them.

(1.) Their Quality, *Churches*; to diſtinguiſh them from all other Societies. The Word ſignifies a *Collection,* and is rarely uſed in Scripture, but to ſignify the Aſſembly of Saints, either really or apparantly ſo. It is commonly deſcribed, a Society of Men and Women, who aſſemble themſelves in the Name of Chriſt, to worſhip God through him, in order to obtain the eternal Salvation of their immortal Souls. When this Word is read in the ſingular Number, it oft-times ſignifies the univerſal Church: *Upon this Rock will I build my Church,* Matth. xvi. 18. *Chriſt loved his Church,* Eph. v. 25. Yet ſometimes it is taken for a Part of the univerſal Church. The Apoſtle *ordained Elders in every Church,* Acts xiv. 23. But wherever we read it in the plural Number, it ſtill ſignifies Parts of the Catholick Church. *Then had the Churches Reſt,* Acts ix. 31. *And* Paul *went about confirming the Churches,* Acts xv. 41.

(2.) Their Number, *Seven.* This is commonly thought to be a Number of Perfection; and ſo, while the Direction is to Seven, it comprehends all the Churches, not only in *Aſia,* but through the World. And, to fortify this, they bring a long Liſt of Sevens; as *Seven Pairs* of clean Creatures were taken into the Ark, *Gen.* vii. 2. *Seven Lamps* and *Seven Pipes* at the Candleſtick mentioned by the Prophet, *Zech.* iv. 2. and a great many other *Sevens*; by which they plead, this *Seven,* and all the other *Sevens* mentioned in this Prophecy, are not to be taken properly; but, being a *ſacred* Number, is equal to an *univerſal* Number. I have no Doubt, but this *Seven* has a further View than to thoſe particular Churches: But others would have this *Seven* have reſpect to *Seven Periods* of the Church, ſucceeding one another till the Fall of *Antichriſt,* and are very pointed as to the Commencement and End of theſe Periods. Could they produce any Thing from the Prophecy itſelf to clear this, and

eſtabliſh

eſtabliſh their Scheme, it might do well; but how they ſhall conclude ſeven ſucceſſive Periods from ſeven Siſter Churches, all ſubſiſting and flouriſhing at the ſame Time, I ſee not. It is very true, the *Seven* Heads are ſucceſſive; but it is as true, the Prophecy declares it: But in this Caſe, not one Word of Succeſſion; which to me is a ſtrong Reaſon no Succeſſion is here intended. If it be enquired, why then this *Seven* is mentioned? I own, it is much eaſier propoſed than reſolved; for it ſeems plain, ſomething prophetical is in it, which will appear as we go through the ſeveral Epiſtles, and that they have a further View than theſe ſeven Churches: Yet, that there ſhould be ſeven Periods of the Church univerſal, exactly correſponding in Order to the Condition of theſe Seven here mentioned, I think will be hard to prove. And, in Uncertainties, it is beſt not to be too peremptory; only this, I think, ſeems plain, that this Part of the Prophecy immediately concerns the *Churches* mentioned; and through them the Spirit ſpeaks to all the Churches in the World, in whatever Period, who ſhall be found in their Temper.

(3.) The Situation of thoſe Churches, in *Aſia*: By which, we are not to underſtand that fourth Part of the Earth which commonly goes under that Name, but that Part of it, called the *Leſſer* or *Proconſular Aſia*, or *Natolia*; and particularly the Weſtern Part of it, where theſe Churches lay. The leſſer *Aſia* is bounded on the Weſt by the *Ægean* Sea, and on the Eaſt by a large Country called *Armenia*; ſo that in that vaſt Tract of Ground there were more than ſeven Churches: But thoſe mentioned lay next to the Iſle of *Patmos*, where *John* was confined; and therefore, it is probable, they kept more Correſpondence with him than any of the other Churches; and on this Account he might write to them.

2. The Salutation itſelf, *Grace and Peace.* The Firſt points at all the Good in Chriſt, and flowing from him, for the Salvation of the Elect. *By Grace ye are ſaved*, Eph. ii. 8. The other at the Fruits and Effects thereof in their Hearts and Lives. *We have Peace with God*, Rom. v. 1.

3. The Author or Spring of this comprehenſive Bleſſing: Not the Apoſtle *John*; his Work was to pronounce the ſame by the Command of God, and as a Chriſtian Miniſter to join Heart and Hand in the Work of God; but theſe are Mercies he had not in his Satchel, and therefore only intimates or pronounces them in the Name of his great Conſtituent, and adds his own hearty Prayers, that the ſame may be made effectual: But the Author of theſe great Bleſſings is God, *One in Three, and Three in One*, expreſly here mentioned. But, becauſe we have in the Words ſome Characters of the Holy Trinity, not ordinary in Scripture, we ſhall notice them the more particularly.

1. The Father is deſcribed in that Clauſe, *Which was, and which is, and which is to come.* That this Character is ſometimes given to the Son, will not infer, that the Father is not meant here, more than when the Son is deſigned *the Everlaſting Father*, Iſa. xi. 6. that the firſt Perſon of the Trinity ſhould not be deſigned the Father. As for the Expreſſions, they ſuit the Father well. *Who is*, ἀπὸ τ῀ ὄν, points him out to be the Fountain of *Deity*, not having the Perſonality from another, as the Son from the Father by Generation, and the *Holy Ghoſt* from the Father and Son by Proceſſion. *Who was*, ὁ ἦν, i. e. before all Worlds began; but it being expreſt in the imperfect Tenſe, implies his Perpetuity, without any Intermiſſion. *Who is to come*, ὁ ἐρχόμενος, * or rather, *who is to be*, i. e. will continue for ever, and never have an End. This Character given the Father, is noticed, by the Learned, to agree to that Manifeſtation of himſelf, *Exod.* iii. 14. *I am that I am. I am hath ſent me*: And to the Name *Jehovah*, taken down in Parts or Parcels, יְ notes the Time to come, הֹ the Time preſent, וָ the Time paſt: And all the Three, in a different Order, make up this in our Text.

2. The Holy Ghoſt is deſcribed, *The Seven Spirits which are before his Throne.* Expoſitors differ as to the Meaning of this, nor may I ſtay to advance and refute them One by One. It ſhall be enough to turn them off in Bulk, that do not underſtand the Holy Ghoſt thereby; And to affirm, it is blaſphemous to mean by theſe *Seven Spirits* any Creature, whether Angel or Man, or yet any Quality or Gift in them, however excellent or neceſſary; and that for theſe Reaſons, 1. Whoever theſe Seven Spirits be, they are joint Workers with the Father and Son in beſtowing *Grace* and *Peace*,

* *Eraſmus* obſerves, that *Beza* commits an Error in tranſlating ἐρχόμενος, *to come*; for, to juſtify that Tranſlation, the Original ſhould be ἐλευσόμενος, and that therefore this Word here muſt be turned *futurus eſt*, and not *venturus eſt*. This cuts off all Cavil about Chriſt's coming to Judgment, as if that were intended here.

which are the Royal Prerogatives of the glorious *Trinity*. And he tells us, *Iſa.* xlii. 8. *I am the Lord, that is my Name, and my Glory will I not give to another.* This is the more remakable, that it is added to a Prophecy of the Diſpenſation of Grace. 2. No Creature is any where in Scripture planted betwixt the Father and Son. 3. No Creature, however excellent, is the Object of Divine Worſhip, from whom we may ſeek Grace and Peace: and therefore, by theſe *Seven Spirits*, we are to underſtand the *Holy Spirit*. 4. This Deſignation is not advanced ſimply to denote the third Perſon of the *Trinity*, but in a ſpecial Manner to point out the Variety of his Operations; juſt as, in the Deſcription of the Father, the plain and ſimple Name whereby he is diſtinguiſhed from the other Two Perſons, is ſuppreſt, and a *Periphraſis* put in its Room, more ſignificant, as is already ſhown. And the Son, after the ſame Manner, is deſcribed, *v.* 5. So that, by the Rule of Proportion, this Circumlocution of Courſe belongs to the *Holy Ghoſt*.

Tho' what is ſaid carries the Matter quite out of the Footing which *Hammond* and others have ſet it on, yet I cannot ſay it is ſatisfactory as to the Senſe and Import of the Text, which I ſhall endeavour to hit in theſe few Queſtions.

Queſt. 1. Why is the *Holy Ghoſt* deſigned *Seven Spirits*, ſeeing he is One, and not manifold? *Anſw.* 1. That this Expreſſion may quadrate with the *Sevens* mentioned in this Book, and particularly to aſſure the whole Seven Churches, they might depend upon the *Holy Ghoſt*, who would be the ſame to them all, yea, and to all the Churches to the End of the World. 2. To ſhew the Variety of his Operations: *For there are Diverſities of Gifts, but the ſame Spirit*, 1 Cor. xii. 4.

Queſt. 2. Why are theſe *Seven Spirits* ſaid to be before his Throne? *Anſw.* This is an Expreſſion after the Manner of Men, in which we may notice the ſublime Dignity of God, by this Analogy uſed from earthly Courts, where the King is enthroned, as a Mark of Diſtinction betwixt him and others. Juſt ſo the Father is repreſented as ſitting on the Throne; the Son, after he had finiſhed the Work of Redemption, is repreſented as ſitting on his Right-hand; and here the Holy Ghoſt, as before the Throne, *i. e.* proceeding from the Father and Son, to be ſent out for the Application of Chriſt's Purchaſe, and here he is repreſented in a Poſture fit for this great Work.

Queſt. 3. Why is the *Holy Ghoſt* mentioned before the Son? *Anſw.* 1. To declare the perfect Equality of the Perſons of the glorious Trinity; for, as the Father is ſometimes named firſt, ſo is the Son, 2 *Cor.* xiii. 14. And here the Holy Ghoſt is named before the Son. 2. The Method choſen by the Apoſtle, required this Order here; for he was only to touch at the Father, and juſt ſo at the Holy Ghoſt, but he was to inſiſt on the Son. And it is a Rule in Method, that the Member or Branch we are moſt to conſider, be laſt mentioned. The Apoſtle had more to do about Chriſt, than barely to mention him, as he did the other Two.

3. The *Son* is deſcribed, *v.* 5. *Jeſus Chriſt, who is the faithful Witneſs*, &c. He is the ſecond Perſon of the Trinity, but laſt mentioned for the Reaſons given. He is named by theſe Deſignations he was known for, while accompliſhing the Work of our Redemption: Which Characters contain both his Work, a *Saviour*, in the Word *Jeſus*; and his *Qualifications* therefore, in the Word *Chriſt*; and by both his *Deity* is aſſerted, being liſted with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt. But further, we have him decyphered to us, in his ſeveral *Mediatory Offices*; as,

Firſt, Of a Prophet, *The faithful Witneſs*; which alludes to that Paſſage, *Who is a ſtrong God like unto thee, or to thy Faithfulneſs round about thee?* Pſal. xcix. 8. While Chriſt, in the Exerciſe of his Prophetick Office, is deſigned a *Faithful Witneſs*, it ſeems to point at theſe Things, (1.) That he bore Teſtimony of his own Perſon and Miſſion. *Tho' I bear Record of my ſelf, yet my Record is true*, John viii. 14. (2.) That he declared the true Doctrine of Salvation from the Father; *I have manifeſted thy Name unto the Men thou gaveſt me out of the World*, John xvii. 6. (3.) That he ſtedfaſtly adhered to theſe at his Death, as well as confirmed them in his Life by Miracles; *Jeſus Chriſt, before* Pontius Pilate, *witneſſed a good Confeſſion*, 1 Tim. vi. 13. (4.) That he continued to direct, and inſpire with his Spirit, all his Miniſters, in the Propagation of the Goſpel; *As my Father hath ſent me, ſo ſend I you*, John xx. 21. So that he continues, by theſe, the Exerciſe of that Office. (5.) That he witneſſed the Truth of what is contained in this Book to *John*.

Secondly, Of a Prieſt, *The Firſt-begotten of the Dead*. Where we are neceſſarily to underſtand his *Propitiation* and *Satisfaction*, that gave him Right to riſe from the Dead. And ſo he is called *The Firſt-born from the Dead*, Col. i. 18. For all that roſe before him were a Kind of Abortion, which did not laſt; like *Lazarus*, and others. But Chriſt, having ſatisfied Juſtice to the utmoſt, did riſe by *Right* and *Law*, and by his Reſurrection eſtabliſhed a ſolid Bottom for the Reſurrection of all that believe; and

and therefore he is called, *The First-fruits of them that ſlept*, 1 Cor. xv. 20. for in that he roſe, he died no more, and by his Reſurrection had conſigned to him a Power of raiſing all the Elect. *For to this End Chriſt both died and roſe — that he might be Lord both of the Dead and of the Living*, Rom. xiv. 9.

Thirdly, Of a King, *The Prince of the Kings of the Earth.* This is not to be ſo underſtood, as if all the Kings of the Earth were Chriſt's dutiful Subjects; but, *1ſt*, To ſhew what a King is in Compariſon of the meaneſt Peaſant, that is Chriſt compared with the greateſt Kings. *2dly*, That he is able to reſtrain the moſt forward and violent of them, and bound their Wrath. *3dly*, That he will be their Judge, and requite their Carriage to his Church, when he comes in that Quality.

II. There is the *Doxology* or *Thankſgiving*, which is twofold, one for his *Mercies*, another for his *Juſtice*: And then we have the Confirmation of our Faith in both theſe, the Firſt, *v.* 5, and 6. the Second, *v.* 7. the Third, *v.* 8.

1. We have the Thankſgiving for Mercies, where we have, 1. The *Mercies* which are the Grounds thereof. 2. The *Thankſgiving* itſelf.

(1.) There are the Mercies which *John* makes the Ground of this his Praiſe, in theſe Particulars, 1. The Fountain-mercy, which is the Spring of all Mercies, *He loved us*. The greateſt Step thereof, and which takes Place here, is remarked by the Apoſtle, *He commended his Love towards us, in that, while we were yet Sinners, Chriſt died for us*, Rom. v. 8. 2. Two Inſtances of the Fulneſs and Efficacy of this Fountain, one for our Purgation, *He waſhed us from our Sins in his own Blood.* This is that great Diſcovery of that greater Love. One calls this *Aurea ſententiæ.* It is indeed the Sum of the Goſpel. It plainly diſcovers the Depth of our Miſery without Chriſt, under Sin and the Filth of it, which could not be expiate another Way: And the Efficacy of the Blood of Chriſt, for theſe Ends. The other for our Exaltation, *He made us Kings and Prieſts unto God and his Father.* Some think in this there is an Alluſion to an *Hebrew* Word, which ſignifies both a *Prince* and *Prieſt.* This is not a Mercy that falls to the Share of a few, but is the common Privilege of all Believers, and is the immediate Effect of our being purged by the Blood of Chriſt. They are firſt *Kings unto God*, in that they are made Conquerors over Sin, *Satan*, and the World; in that they have the Honour and Title of a King, they ſit upon a *Throne*, they wear a *Crown*, they judge the World: *For they execute the Judgment written, this Honour have all the Saints*, Pſal. cxlix. 9. They are ſecondly *Prieſts unto God*, in that they offer up their Body a living Sacrifice; they offer up Prayers and Praiſes unto him, with Aſſurance of Acceptation.

(2.) The *Thankſgiving*, where are, *1ſt*, The Parts thereof. 1. *Glory*, i. e. all Praiſe and Honour, owning and worſhipping him as very God, and our God, to whom we have engaged our ſelves. 2. *Dominion* or Power, *i. e.* to own him as the Almighty, and ſubject to, or equal with none. 3. The Continuance of this, *for ever and ever*, *i. e.* to all the Ages of Eternity. And all this confirmed and ſealed with an eminent Act of Faith in the *Amen.*

2dly, There is the other Ground of Thankſgiving, from the Glory of his Juſtice, *v.* 7. We ſhortly note in this, for we are not to inſiſt on them,

1. His glorious Appearance, *He cometh with Clouds.* When Chriſt aſcended to Heaven, it was in a glorious *Cloud*; and, in like Manner, when he comes again to Judgment, he will come in a *Cloud*: Then it is he will appear to be the *Prince* of the Kings of the Earth. But here the Apoſtle diſtinguiſheth betwixt his firſt and ſecond Appearing in Clouds. In the firſt, his Aſcenſion, only a few were Witneſſes, and theſe his Favourites: But then *every Eye ſhall ſee him*, Friends and Foes; not only thoſe who pierced him on the Croſs, but thoſe who pierce him in Heaven with their Sins, ſhall ſee him.

2. The dreadful Effect of his coming upon his Enemies, *All the Kindreds* [Tribes] *of the Earth ſhall wail becauſe of him.* It is plain, this does not point at the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, but at the final Diſſolution of the World. And it is the ſame in Senſe with that, *Then ſhall appear the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven, coming in the Clouds, with Power, and great Glory*, Mat. 24. 30. This will be a Wailing of Deſpair to the Wicked.

3. We have the Approbation, in the Word ναὶ, which we may look upon as comprehending the Thankſgiving before-mentioned; for this will be Matter of Praiſe to his Saints, however terrible it ſhall prove to his Enemies: And then the Confirmation thereof in the *Amen.*

3dly, There is the Ground or Confirmation of our Faith in both theſe, *v* 8. *I am* A *and* Ω, *&c.* Theſe Two Letters are the firſt and laſt of the *Greek* Alphabet, in which Language the Prophecy was written, and is explained in the next Clauſe, *the Begin-*

ning and the Ending. Where we have theſe Three Grounds for our Faith of them in Chriſt, 1. He is the Beginning and the Ending, *i. e.* he is the Author of all Things, and the End to which he will direct them. 2. He is the great *Jehovah*, *Lord*, which is, was, and will be. 3. He is the Almighty, and therefore nothing too hard for him: It is not in the Power of any to gainſtand him, or obſtruct what he deſigns, and has either promiſed or threatned.

VISION I.

HAving now conſidered the Introduction to this Goſpel-prophecy, we proceed to the firſt Viſion that offers itſelf, which is a Diſplay of Chriſt in a very glorious Manner, and diſcovers his Care of, and Preſence with his Churches, according to his faithful Promiſe before his Aſcenſion.

This Viſion goes on from the 9 *v.* of this, to the End of the third Chapter. Here we have to conſider, 1. Some preliminary Circumſtances in *v.* 9. and 10. 2. The whole Viſion itſelf in what follows.

9 I John, who am alſo your Brother, and Companion in Tribulation, and in the Kingdom and Patience of Jeſus Chriſt, was in the Iſle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the Teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt.

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day.

Theſe preliminary Circumſtances may be reduced to Four, 1. The Perſon. 2. The Place. 3. The Time. 4. His Frame at that Time, in that Place.

I. The Perſon who was honoured with this Viſion; who, beſides his Name (of which we have ſpoke) is deſcribed further, from theſe Things,

1. His Relation to the Churches, *Your Brother.* This Word is uſed to expreſs the near Relation of theſe begot by the ſame Father, or brought forth by the ſame Mother, or both: Sometimes it ſignifies alſo a remoter Degree of Conſanguinity, as firſt or ſecond Couſins; ſo *James* is called *the Brother of our Lord*, Gal. i. 19. Sometimes it denotes the ſame Employ or Office; ſo the Apoſtles were called *Brethren*, and deſigned one another after that loving Compellation. But moſt ordinarily it is taken in a more extenſive Senſe, to expreſs the Relation and Love betwixt the myſtical Members of Jeſus Chriſt; thus all Chriſtians are called *holy Brethren*, Heb. iii. 1. Again, *Brother goeth to Law with Brother*, 1 Cor. vi. 6. It is a Compellation that has much Affection in it; and, in this Apoſtle, has a notable Condeſcenſion. It has, further, much Honour with it, and implies they are begot by the ſame Father, Heirs of the ſame Hope, and Sharers of the ſame Privileges. Yea, Chriſt himſelf, the eternal Son of God, *is not aſhamed to call* Believers *Brethren*, Heb. ii. 11.

2. From his Exerciſe, *Your Companion in Tribulation*; by which we are to underſtand, that our Apoſtle not only ſuffered the like Afflictions with theſe Churches, but that he alſo took Share with them in all their Troubles, by Compaſſion with them, and Prayer for them; he was troubled for their Trouble, and afflicted for their Afflictions. This, as it is a notable Chriſtian Duty, ſo a ſpecial Preparative, engaging them to liſten unto, and ponder what he was to communicate to them.

3. He deſcribes himſelf, not only from his *Wreſtlings*, but from his *Comforts*; he was *their Companion in the Kingdom and Patience of Jeſus Chriſt.* This is a wiſe Inſinuation of their Duty, from his Example: The firſt ſhews the Thing contended for, the *Kingdom of Chriſt*; he had before deſigned them *Kings* and *Prieſts*, now he tells them of a *Kingdom*; and as they had the Charter from Chriſt, ſo the Kingdom is alſo his. It matters not, whether by *Kingdom* we underſtand the Kingdom of Grace, or Glory, or both: For the plain Meaning is, the great Prize that Believers propoſe to themſelves, as the Ground of their Sufferings; and any of theſe, much more both, are ſufficient to ſtate our Sufferings on; yea, the ſmalleſt Point about any of theſe Kingdoms, is of more Value than the Lives of many Saints. The ſecond ſhews the Frame of Mind they have in this Struggle, and whence it comes, *the Patience of Jeſus Chriſt*; for the *Patience* is as much of Chriſt, as the Kingdom: *For unto you is given in Behalf of Chriſt, not only to believe on him, but alſo to ſuffer*, Philip. i. 29.

II. The

II. The next Circumſtance is the Place where *John* had this Viſion; *I was in the Iſle which is called* Patmos, *for the Word of God, and for the Teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt.* Where we are to Notice, 1. The Place where he was. 2. The Occaſion of his being there. 3. From both, to eſtabliſh the Period.

1. The Place where he was, *The Iſle of* Patmos. This is one of the Iſles, called, for Diſtinction's Sake, by Geographers, *Cyclades*, in the *Ægean* or *Icarian* Sea; they are reckoned Thirty five in Number, they are generally very Barren. This of *Patmos* is ſaid to be about Thirty or more Miles in Compaſs: It is but ill Peopled yet, and no Doubt was worſe then, becauſe of its Barrenneſs; It is near the Coaſt of leſſer *Aſia*, lying betwixt it and *Greece*. It is not to be ſuppoſed he went thither voluntarily; nay, the contrary is plainly inſinuate in the next Clauſe, *viz.*

2. The Cauſe or Occaſion of his being there, *For the Word of God, and the Teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt.* It is not alledged by any (as far as I know) that he went there to preach the Goſpel to the few, yea, very few, Inhabitants of that Iſland: And ſome own it was not inhabited by any, but thoſe whom the Emperor had exiled, and a few that waited on them: Whence it is plain, he was baniſhed, or confined there; which he calls an *Affliction*, in the former Clauſe. There are two Expreſſions here which give the Grounds. 1. *For the Word of God*; that was his Crime in the Eyes of the Heathen, who were deſtitute of the Knowledge of God. 2. *For the Teſtimony of Jeſus*, i. e. that Witneſs which he bore to *Jeſus Chriſt*, as the *Son* of *God* and Saviour of the World: Or it may point at God's Deſign in ſending him, rather to this obſcure Place, than to any other, where he might have been more ſerviceable by preaching of the Goſpel, *viz.* That, with the leſs Interruption and Diſtraction, he might liſten to, and communicate unto the Churches, the Teſtimony of Chriſt, in the Words of this Prophecy.

3. From theſe, we are a little to enquire into the Period of Time when this Confinement of our *Apoſtle* happened; which may be of Uſe to the Underſtanding ſome weighty Paſſages of this Prophecy. Some tell us, It was before the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*: But this is manifeſtly falſe, if we can truſt Hiſtory, (and indeed we have no other Light in this Matter) which fairly witneſſes againſt it. To find out this Truth, we muſt ſhortly trace the Perſecutions, as they are accounted for, by the moſt ancient Hiſtorians. The firſt Perſecution is ſaid to begin under *Nero*, about 23 Years after Chriſt's Aſcenſion, which laſted about 3 Years, and ended with the Death of that Monſter of Mankind; then the Chriſtians had Reſt for ſeveral Years: Which was owing partly to the ſhort Reigns of *Galba*, *Otho*, and *Vitellius*; partly to the Kindneſs of *Titus Veſpaſian*, who, tho' he deſtroyed *Jeruſalem*, was not ill-natured to the Chriſtians; and perhaps favoured them the more, they were hateful to the *Jews*. But, after him, *Domitian* coming to the Imperial Seat, about 80 and odd Years after *Chriſt's* Aſcenſion, ſome ſay about 90 or more, he perſecuted the Church for the Space of 7 Years, in which Time he put many to Death, and baniſhed more, among whom was our *Apoſtle*, who was confined to this obſcure and ill-inhabited Iſland, that he might not have Acceſs to ſpread that Doctrine *Domitian* was ſo great an Enemy to; which is generally agreed to have been about the 91 or 92 Year after our Lord's Reſurrection, and ſo it will fall in with the Year of Chriſt's Birth 125. It is further ſaid, That the Apoſtle remained about 4 Years under this Reſtraint; and, after the Tyrant's Death, went to *Epheſus*, where he died. This makes it certain, that no Part of this Prophecy can concern the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, ſeeing that was accompliſhed about 61 Years after our Lord finiſhed the Work of Redemption, and ſo at leaſt 30 Years before *John* was baniſhed to the Iſle of *Patmos*.

III. Circumſtance is, the Time when *John* had (at leaſt) the firſt of theſe *Viſions*; *The Lord's Day*. Mr. *Durham* accurately obſerves, our Tranſlation is not according to the Original; for it ſhould run, *On that Lord's Day*, which truly defeats many Janglings upon that Part of the Text: By it, then, we are to underſtand that Day of the Week, ſet apart by the Apoſtles (having Warrant and Authority from our Lord Jeſus Chriſt) for the Performance of publick Worſhip. It is called frequently *the firſt Day of the Week*, Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 1. That Day, wherein Chriſt roſe from the Dead. It was the conſtant Time of publick Aſſemblies, tho' not the only Time. It is here alſo plainly intimated, that there were more Lord's Days than one, while it is ſaid, *Upon that Lord's Day*. It gets that Deſignation, for the ſame Reaſon that the Sacrament of the Supper is called the *Lord's Supper*, 1 Cor. xi. 20. becauſe Chriſt inſtituted it; and to diſtinguiſh it from other Days, juſt as the Lord's Supper is diſtinguiſhed from all other Suppers: And as the Supper was deſigned as a Memorial of Chriſt's Death, ſo is the Lord's Day a ſtanding Memorial of his Reſurrection. Now, by the Command of God, Chriſtians were to aſſemble themſelves together on that Day.

But it is more than probable, there was no Congregation to be had in this Iſland; and therefore the Apoſtle, by himſelf, remembers that Day, and no Doubt in his own Apartment, by giving up himſelf to ſpiritual Exerciſes, as Meditation, Prayer, Praiſe, *&c.* Which brings to the

IV. Circumſtance, the Apoſtle's Frame, in theſe Words, *I was in the Spirit.* It ſeems very plain, this was not the Apoſtle's ordinary Condition, elſe he would not ſpeak of it in ſo diſtinguiſhing a Manner: We are not to doubt, but he had for ordinary a very ſpiritual and holy Frame; but what he was bleſt with then, was extraordinary; yet not, but that himſelf, and other holy Men, might at Times have even this; and ſo it is generally thought to ſignify an Extaſy. We read after the ſame Manner *Ezekiel's* Impreſſions, deſcribed in unordinary Terms, *Ezek.* i. 3. *The Hand of the Lord was there upon him.* And in ſeveral other Parts of his Prophecy, we have the ſame, *Ezek.* iii. 22. If any will but view the Manifeſtations that Prophet had upon the Back of theſe Expreſſions, he will be eaſily ſatisfied it was a very extraordinary Frame he was in at theſe Times. This can be alſo juſtified from the New Teſtament, where it is ſaid, *Paul fell into a Trance,* Acts x. 10. and had a Viſion from God, which was no doubt more than an ordinary Influence of the Spirit, to diſpoſe him the better to notice the Manifeſtation. How any Man can preſume to deſcribe this, I ſee not, when theſe who were honoured therewith, declared they could not: *Whether out of the Body, or in the Body, I cannot tell,* 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3. But this we know from Scripture, that ſometimes in Sleep there are made upon the Mind of Man Impreſſions of the Will of God, which are called Dreams: Sometimes there were bodily Repreſentations made to the outward Senſes: *A Viſion appeared unto* Paul *in the Night, there ſtood a Man of* Macedonia, *&c.* Acts xvi. 9. At other Times there were intellectual Repreſentations and Impreſſions: So *Daniel* received the Dream of *Nebuchadnezzar,* with the Interpretation thereof. Some think, that at Times, in theſe Viſions, the Perſons have their Souls ſeparated from their Bodies, that they may have the juſter Diſcovery of the Manifeſtation; and that that of the Apoſtle *Paul* was ſuch: But, as the Candle of Revelation does not clearly diſcover theſe Things to us, ſo neither can we have any right Conception of them; and therefore we can proceed no further with Safety. It is however unqueſtionable, our Apoſtle had ſome extraordinary Elevation of his Soul, by the Spirit of God, fitting him for the Contemplation of the heavenly Viſion, which we are next to conſider.

This Viſion reaches to the End of the third Chapter; in which we have, 1. A ſolemn Repreſentation of Chriſt, with ſome particular Directions from him to the beloved Apoſtle. 2. Seven Letters from Chriſt, to be conveyed by *John* to the ſeven Churches; the firſt to the Cloſe of this Chapter, the next in the ſecond and third Chapters.

As for the Manifeſtation itſelf, I take it up in two Generals, 1. What was diſcovered to *John's* Ear, from the Middle of *v.* 10. to the Middle of *v.* 12. together with the Conſequent thereof. 2. What was diſcovered to *John's* View, from thence to the Cloſe of the Chapter, together with the Conſequents thereof.

10 — I heard behind me a great Voice, as of a Trumpet,

11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the Firſt and the Laſt: And what thou ſeeſt, write in a Book, and ſend it unto the ſeven Churches which are in Aſia, unto Epheſus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

12 And I turned to ſee the Voice that ſpake with me. And being turned,——

There is here to be conſidered, the Manifeſtation made to the Prophet's Ear, where I notice, 1. The Manner of the Voice. 2. The Matter that the Voice uttered. And, 3. The Conſequent or Effect it had upon *John.*

I. There is the Manner of the Voice, *v.* 10. Theſe three Ways he explains the Manner of this Voice. 1. In a proper Manner. 2. By a Similitude. 3. Whence he heard it.

1. This Voice is deſcribed to us in a proper Manner, a *great Voice.* It was a *Voice,* not an inarticulate Sound, as ſome plead, for it is a ſpeaking Voice; yea, tho' ſometimes this Word doth ſignify an inarticulate Sound, as *the Sound of their Wings,* Rev. ix. 9. yet it cannot be ſo here, ſeeing we have the Words uttered by it in the next Verſe.

Verſe. It is further deſigned, a *great* Voice, or a loud Voice; ſuch a Voice there was when the Law was promulgate from *Sinai*. And no Wonder the Voice was great, if we conſider, 1. Whoſe Voice it was, even God's. 2. What it was uttering, great Matters, that concern the Church to the End of the World. 3. To whom it was to go, the ſecure and ſlumbring Churches of *Aſia*. It is compared to the Voice of many Waters, *v.* 15. or, as ſome think, the Meaning is, Like the Sound of many Water-falls, or Cataracts, which have a moſt prodigious Noiſe.

2. This Voice is repreſented to us by a Similitude, *as of a Trumpet*; which will explain it to us in theſe Things, 1. A Trumpet hath a ſharp and penetrating Sound, and was uſed to call the Aſſemblies of God's People together, *Numb.* x. 2. becauſe heard at a great Diſtance. 2. It has an awful Sound, in order to exite the Hearers; *Shall a Trumpet be blown in the City, and the People not be afraid*? Amos iii. 6. 3. It leaves a laſting Impreſſion of its Sound upon the Mind of Hearers, and therefore Miniſters are commanded *to liſt up their Voice like a Trumpet*, Iſa. lviii. 1. 4. It was uſed as the Symbol of God's glorious and legiſlative Preſence; ſo we have it uſed, *the Sound of a Trumpet, and the Voice of Words*, Heb. xii. 19. 5. It is what will be uſed at the laſt Judgment, *The Lord himſelf will deſcend with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, with the Trump of God*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 16. Tho' this, as it ſtands here, is plainly a Repreſentation of God's Call to *John*, that he might with the more Attention liſten to what was to follow; Yet, in the Truth of the Thing, the Whole may well agree to the Call of the Goſpel.

3. Whence the Voice came? *From behind him.* Why this Voice ſhould be behind him, and not before him, may be enquired: And we offer theſe Conjectures, 1. The more to ſtir up this Apoſtle to Attention, and to conſider what was uttered. 2. To perſwade us this Viſion was no idle Phantom, which he could not have of Things behind him. 3. To ſatisfy him, that ſhortly after his Time, theſe Things ſhould begin to have their Accompliſhment. 4. To aſſure him, and by him all God's People, that God will not be wanting to them, when their Conditions are moſt ſtraitning; therefore a Voice comes to *John*, an Exile: And ſo it is propheſied for the Comfort of the Godly, *Thine Ear ſhall hear a Word behind thee, ſaying, This the Way, walk ye in it*, Iſa. xxx. 21. When their Eyes ſee no Way of Evaſion, their Ears ſhall hear a Word of Conſolation. 5. To move *John* to ſeek after the Sound; one Manifeſtation is deſign'd to appetize him for another.

II. There is the Matter that the Voice uttered; and here is declared, 1. The Perſon that ſpoke. 2. The Thing that he commanded.

1. There is the Declaration or Deſcription of the Speaker, *v.* 11. *I am Alpha and Omega, the Firſt and the Laſt*; this was explained above, *v.* 8. It is here repeated, for theſe Reaſons, 1. To ſatisfy all to whom the Knowledge of this Prophecy comes, of the *Deity* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. 2. To convince that this is no cunningly deviſed Fable, but is in Truth the Word of God. The like of this we find very commonly introductory to ſpecial Revelations, *Exod.* iii. 6. *I am the God of thy Father, the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, the God of Jacob.* And, when our Lord ſaw his Diſciples in great Terror, he comforted them by the Diſcovery of himſelf, *It is I, be not afraid*, Mat. xiv. 27. Juſt ſo, when our Lord deſigned his Words ſhould have the greater Influence upon *Saul*, he deſcribes himſelf, *I am Jeſus whom thou perſecuteſt*, Acts ix. 5.

2. We have here the Command given by this Perſon, which is twofold, 1. For Regiſtration. 2. For Publication. He was to regiſtrate it for Preſervation, and to publiſh it for Information.

(1.) *John* is commanded to regiſtrate this Viſion; *What thou ſeeſt, write in a Book.* If it had not been committed to Writing, it would quickly have been either loſt, or corrupted. We need not be nice in ſcanning the Word *Book*; ſometimes it ſignifies a large Tractat, ſo all the Five Books of *Moſes* are called *The Book of the Law*, Gal. iii. 10. Sometimes it is to be underſtood of ſome ſhort Paper, as a *Bill of Divorce*, Mat. xix. 7. for it is the ſame Word is rendred a *Bill* there, which is turned a *Book* here: To be ſure, the whole Viſion was to be recorded in one Book; and not a Part of it in one Paper, and another Part in a different Scroll. Here it is to be noted, that *John* was, by the poſitive Command of God, obliged to write; and therefore the Things written, are not the Apoſtle's, but Chriſt's. Again, he is reſtricted to the *Viſion*: He might not write what he pleaſed, but only theſe Things diſcovered to him, *what thou ſeeſt*; which muſt comprehend what he *heard*, as well as what he *ſaw*; for indeed, an Account of the one, without the other, would never have been underſtood.

(2.) *John* is commanded to publiſh the ſame, *Send it unto the Seven Churches which are in Aſia.* As it was written by the ſpecial Appointment of God, ſo by his

Order it was publiſhed. It is a Book licenſed by the King of Kings; and therefore, we not only may, but muſt read it. In this Act of Licence, we note theſe few Things, 1. To whom this Viſion was to be publiſhed, as to their Quality, *Churches*; not to every one, nay, nor to every Society, but only to religious Societies, called *Churches*, of which on *v.* 4. Under the Old Diſpenſation, we find it numbred among their Privileges, *that the Oracles of God were committed to them*, Rom. iii. 2. Under the New, we find the Spirit of God directing all his Meſſages to Churches; which plainly ſays, That God will require of them an Account of this great Truſt, and we ſhould be careful to preſerve the Teſtimony in the Ark; which is plainly the Intendment of the Figure. 2. We have theſe Churches numbred, *Seven*; of which before. 3. They are deſigned from the Continent where they lay, in *Aſia*. Not but that there were other Churches, at that Time, both in *Europe* and *Africa*; but it pleaſed Chriſt to ſingle out this Part of the World to conſerve the Words of this Prophecy, from which it was to flow to all other Churches in the World. 4. Theſe Churches are particularly pointed at, from the ſeveral Cities where they dwelt, as *Epheſus*, *Smyrna*, *Pergamos*, *Thyatira*, *Sardis*, *Philadelphia*, and *Laodicea*, to all which we have particular Letters directed, in the Two following Chapters. We may not think there were no other Churches in *Aſia* but theſe Seven; for, we are ſure, there were very many in *Paleſtine*, *Perſia*, &c. but here only the leſſer *Aſia* is named. Yea, we are ſure, there were more Churches than Seven even in *Natolia*; but plainly there is ſomething further couched up in this, than yet has been thought of, as we inſinuated before. 5. The Way how they were to be publiſhed to theſe Churches: He was not to wait till they ſent about them, for that could never have entred into their Minds; but he is commanded to ſend the Book unto them. It would be very needleſs to queſtion, whether the Apoſtle *John* ſent a particular Copy to every ſeveral Church? or, if he ordered one Church to communicate the Book to another? or, whether every particular Church had no more but the ſpecial Letter directed thereto, in the ſecond and third Chapters? For, 'tis plain, all the Epiſtles were of publick Uſe, and, no Doubt, were publiſhed through all the Churches, and not ſent in Fragments and Parcels. But, whether there were only One Copy, or Seven different Ones, I imagine too curious, and, beſides, needleſs.

III. There is the Conſequent or Effect it had upon *John*, v. 12. *And I turned to ſee the Voice that ſpake with me.* A Voice cannot be ſeen, it only affects the Ear. It is therefore a *Metonomie*, the Effect for the Cauſe; ſo that the Meaning is, I turned to ſee him that ſpoke to me. This makes it plain to me, whatever Rapture the Apoſtle was in, his Soul was not ſeparate from his Body, elſe he needed not have turned himſelf, yea, he could not have turned himſelf. Beſides, when he turned himſelf, he was bleſſed with an external Viſion, which required the Uſe of bodily Eyes to take it up; yet all the While in the Spirit. Which brings to the

Second Part of the Manifeſtation that was made to *John*'s Eye, which we have from the Middle of *v.* 12. to the Cloſe. In this we have Two Parts, 1. The Viſion or Manifeſtation itſelf, to *v.* 17. 2. The Conſequents thereof, in the reſt.

12 ——I ſaw Seven Golden Candleſticks.

13 And in the Midſt of the Seven Candleſticks One like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a Garment down to the Foot, and girt about the Paps with a Golden Girdle.

14 His Head and his Hairs were white like Wool, as white as Snow: And his Eyes were as a Flame of Fire:

15 And his Feet like unto fine Braſs, as if they burned in a Furnace: And his Voice as the Sound of many Waters.

16 And he had in his Right-hand Seven Stars: And out of his Mouth went a ſharp two-edged Sword, and his Countenance was as the Sun ſhineth in his Strength.

In this Viſion we have to notice, 1. The Place, *v.* 12. 2. The Perſon, in what follows.

I. We have the Place, *Seven Golden Candleſticks*, which is fully explain'd, *v.* 20. and therefore ſhall ſuperſede the Conſideration thereof till we come to that Verſe. But here it may be enquired, Why the Figure of the Churches is advanced before the Emblem of Chriſt himſelf, ſeeing he is infinitely more worthy? To this I offer, by Way of Anſwer, theſe few Things,

1. This

1. This is the ordinary Method in this Prophecy, to mention laſt what is moſt to be inſiſted on, as we ſaw before on *v.* 5. and afterwards, *Chap.* iv. 2. where the Throne is mentioned before him that ſat on it: And, in like Manner, *Chap.* vi. we find the Horſes deſcribed before their Riders; ſo here, he was but to touch at the Candleſticks, but to dwell on the Perſon that is amongſt them.

2. All the Excellency beſtowed on Chriſt as Mediator, was given him for the Behoof and Advantage of the Church, *John* i. 16. *For of his Fulneſs have all we received, and Grace for Grace.* And he is ſaid, *Heb.* ix. 24. *to appear in the Preſence of God for us.*

3. Chriſt diſcovers himſelf moſt plainly and clearly by his Care of, and Goodneſs to his Church, *Gen.* xxii. 14. *In the Mount of the Lord it ſhall be ſeen.* But, of this we have a plain Evidence, *v.* 5, and 6. of this Chapter.

II. There is the Perſon deſcribed, as in this Place; for the Deſcription given here of Chriſt, is with Relation to the Church: Where we notice, 1. The Perſon. 2. His Apparel. 3. An emblematical Account of his ſeveral Parts.

(1.) The Perſon he ſaw, *One like unto the Son of Man.* It is generally owned on all Hands, that by *the Son of Man*, we are to underſtand *Jeſus Chriſt* the Redeemer; but the grand Difficulty in this Place is, who this was that appeared to *John*, becauſe it is not ſaid the Son of Man appeared to him, but *One like* the Son of Man, and *like* is not the *ſame*. The Conſideration of this has moved ſome to think this was not Chriſt, but the Angel he ſent to *John* to ſignify theſe Things to him; but we cannot go in to this Opinion, becauſe, 1. It is nowhere ſaid in Scripture, that ever an Angel did venture to appear in the Form of Chriſt, which would certainly be a moſt unaccountable Step of Inſolence. 2. God, in the ſecond Commandment, forbids us to repreſent him to ourſelves by any Thing in Heaven or Earth; and it cannot be ſuppoſed, he would ever repreſent himſelf to us by another. 3. It was certainly no Angel; for a good Angel would not lie, which of Neceſſity he muſt do, when he ſaid, *v.* 18. *I am he that liveth, and was dead*, &c.

But, that we may be further ſatisfied as to the Meaning of this, I ſhall offer theſe few Conſiderations, 1. This Expreſſion ſeems to be taken from a Viſion *Daniel* had, *And behold, One like the Son of Man*, Dan. vii. 13. Which, all own, ſignifies Chriſt, and no created Angel. It is as true, in that Viſion of *Daniel*, it was not the very Humane Nature of Chriſt, which he did not aſſume to himſelf till after the ſeventy Weeks were accompliſhed; it was only a Figure or Repreſentation of what he was to be, when *the Fulneſs of Time* ſhould come. 2. *Likneſs* does not always ſignify *Diverſity*; elſe this would deſtroy the Divinity of Chriſt, who is frequently in Scripture called *Michael*, Dan. x. 13. Jude 9. Rev. xii. 7. which ſignifies *who is like God*: Yet it is certain, he is *very God*. Again, it is ſaid, *He was made in the Likeneſs of Men*, Phil. ii. 7. tho' we are ſure he was a true Man. 3. It is he that gave *John* a Commiſſion to write the *Viſion*, v. 11. It is he that ſaid, *I am he that liveth, and was dead*, &c. All which can only agree to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. 4. This Appearance of Chriſt is not that Form of a Servant he had in the Days of his Humiliation, for theſe were long before paſt; and now he is glorioufly *exalted at the Right-hand of the Majeſty of God on high.* 5. To affirm that this was really his glorified Body, now in Heaven, were foreward, and it may be more than enough; yet we are ſure, *John* was not the only Perſon was bleſt with ſuch a Viſion, for *Stephen* had it, and ſaid, *Behold, I ſee the Heavens opened, and the Son of Man ſitting on the Right-hand of God*, Acts vii. 56. 6. It would be conſidered, this is a Viſion of Chriſt, not according to one of his Natures, but of his whole Perſon as God-Man; and eſpecially, as he is the great Governor and Ruler of his Church: And ſo we are to underſtand theſe ſeveral Parts of his Appearance, as relative to the Church, and as Props to their Faith, and Spurs to their Duty. We will underſtand more of this, from the View of theſe ſeveral Steps of his Appearance; and eſpecially from the Explication of the ſecond Viſion, *Chap.* iv.

This is further evident from the Place where he did appear, *In the Midſt of the ſeven Candleſticks*, i. e. in the Midſt of the *Churches*: And while it is ſaid he was in the Midſt of them all, it ſhews he is equally preſent with every Part of the Church univerſal; no one particular Church wants that which his neceſſary Preſence giveth, as he promiſed, *Where Two or Three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the Midſt of them*, Matth. xviii. 20. Sometimes he is ſaid to be *ſtanding*, which is a watchful and careful Poſture: Sometimes *ſitting*, which is a Poſture of Honour and Majeſty: Sometimes *walking*, which may note the Satisfaction he has in being *All* in every Part thereof. But we ſhall further conſider theſe Expreſſions as they occur.

(2.) His Apparel: This, together with the following Similitudes, in many Things agree with *Daniel's* Viſion, *Dan.* x. 5. And the one Place (tho' both be dark enough to our ſhallow Underſtandings) will give Light to the other. Here we have to view two Pieces of his Apparel.

1. The upper or main Garment, *Clothed with a Garment down to the Foot. Daniel* adds, *clothed in Linen*; which is uſed to decypher the ſpotleſs Holineſs of the Perſon: So the Raiment of the Saints is ſaid to be *Linen clean and white*, Rev. xix. 8. And that here he is deſcribed by a *long Robe*, points out his Power and Authority; for ſuch Robes were only, at leaſt ordinarily, worn by three Sorts of Perſons, as Kings, Prieſts, and Prophets; and, no Doubt, this is to point out the threefold Office of Chriſt, and thence to ſhew the great and manifold Advantages the Churches were to expect from the Preſence of Chriſt, that they might be moved to deſire the ſame.

2. His Girdle; *Girt about the Paps with a golden Girdle. Daniel* has it, *Whoſe Loins were girded with fine Gold of Uphaz*, Dan. x. 5. Where there is only this Difference, what *Daniel* calls the *Loins*, *John* calls the *Paps*; and they will be eaſily reconciled, if we conſider, that all that Part of the Body we call the Trunk, is expreſſed by one Word, but ſeverally, as it is called the *Loins*, the *Reins*, the *Breaſt*; and ſo it may point either at the glorious Breaſt-plate that the High-prieſts wore, which was faſtned above to his Shoulders, and below to his Girdle, and thus covered the whole Breaſt: In this was the *Urim* and *Thummim*, Light and Perfection, which was but typical in them, but real in Chriſt. The Prophet *Iſaiah* gives a lively Commentary on this, *Righteouſneſs ſhall be the Girdle of his Loins, and Faithfulneſs the Girdle of his Reins*, Iſa. xi. 5. And again, *I will ſtrengthen him with thy Girdle*, Iſa. xxii. 21. This Girdle is ſaid to be of Gold; or, as *Daniel* has it, the Gold of *Uphaz*, which is thought to be the ſame with *Ophir*, whence the beſt Gold is brought. This then is a Note of Diſtinction, and ſhews the ſingular Truſt God had repoſed in the Mediator, and his perſonal Dignity, which we know in Part is uſually diſcovered by ſomething in the Garb; and ſo this points out both Chriſt's Authority and Glory, and is the Foundation of Submiſſion and Affection from the Churches to him.

(3.) We have an emblematical Account of his ſeveral Parts, which I ſhall conſider in that Order we have them laid before us, *v.* 14, 15, 16.

1. The Emblem of his Head and Hair, which are ſaid to be *white as Wool, as white as Snow. Daniel* has it, *The Hair of his Head as pure Wool*, Dan. vii. 9. which is there ſpoke of the *Ancient of Days*, i. e. God. We need not be anxious here, with ſome, to diſtinguiſh betwixt the Head and the Hair, but only of the Appearance of the Head, as covered with the Hair. This we take as an irrefragable Argument for the Divinity of Chriſt. It is plain, it is not to be meant of his Humane Nature, which cannot be ſuppoſed to have come the Length of Gray-hairs, conſidering how ſhort While he was upon the Earth; and therefore, it is an Hieroglyphick of the whole Perſon, and has ſeveral Things couched up therein: As, 1. His Reverend Majeſty, for gray or white Hairs commands Reverence from Spectators; ſo *he only is to be feared.* 2. His great Wiſdom and Experence, theſe being the ordinary Perfections of gray Hairs. 3. His perfect Purity and Holineſs; ſo we find Wool and Snow uſed in Scripture, *Iſa.* i. 18. Your Sins ſhall *be white as Snow, white as Wool.* Pſal. li. 7. *Purge me with Hyſſop, and I ſhall be clean, I ſhall be whiter than the Snow.* 4. His Eternity; and therefore, in that Quotation from *Daniel*, he is deſigned *the Ancient of Days.*

2. The Emblem of his Eyes, *His Eyes were as a Flame of Fire. Daniel* has it, *His Eyes were as Lamps of Fire*, Dan. x. 6. Both Expreſſions are much to the ſame Purpoſe; we have the ſame Expreſſion of Chriſt afterwards, *Rev.* xix. 12. In general, it points out the Omniſcience of the Mediator, and ſo it is a new Proof of his Divinity. But more particularly, this Emblem repreſents to us theſe Things, 1. The penetrating Nature of Chriſt's Knowledge; for Fire not only diſcovers, but tries and pierceth; this we are ſure of, for it is given as the Senſe of this Emblem, in the Epiſtle to the Church of *Thyatira*, Rev. ii. 18. which is the Deſignation Chriſt takes to himſelf in the Inſcription, *v.* 23. and explains it in the Body of the Letter, *I am he that ſearcheth the Heart and Reins.* 2. The Terror of his Look to his Enemies; he has a fiery Look to them, and makes terrible Impreſſions upon them, his Eyes kindle a deſtroying Fire, *Exod.* xiv. 24. while he *lookt upon the Hoſt of* Pharaoh, *they were troubled*; which Look was through the Pillar of Fire. This alſo points at the attractive Beauty of Chriſt, for the Eye is the Seat of much Agreeableneſs; and in Scripture we have the Church commending her Lord, for the Beauty of his Eyes; much to the ſame Purpoſe with this Expreſſion, *His Eyes are as the Eyes of Doves*, Song v. 12. which has a flaming or fiery Aſpect, but with great Beauty.

3. The

3. The Emblem of his Feet, *v.* 15. *His Feet like unto fine Braſs, as if they burned in a Furnace. Daniel* ſays, *His Arms and his Feet were like in Colour to poliſhed Braſs,* Dan. x. 6. 'Tis plain, *Daniel* mentions both the Extremities, Arms and Feet, our Apoſtle only the Feet; to ſome this makes great Work: But, I think, we may well allow the one to be comprehended under the other, eſpecially that when, in the next Verſe, he ſpeaks of the Hands, he has no Emblem about them, only touches at what he held in his Hands. There is no ſmall Stir made concerning this Metal to which his Feet are reſembled. It is evident, our Tranſlators have rendred both the *Hebrew* and *Greek* Word by the ſame Name, *Braſs*; tho', I confeſs, that mixed Metal, which with us goes under that Name, is not to be meant; for 'tis certain, our Braſs is a Compoſition, and no pure Metal, nor of ſo old a Date as the lateſt of them: And beſides, it is a compound Word uſed here, which has perplexed the Learned very much. But, whether it was a ſpecial Metal, dug out of Mount *Lebanon*, in Colour like Amber, in Quality like Cryſtal, and of all other Metals had the greateſt Reſemblance to Fire; as *Ezekiel* ſays, *I ſaw as the Colour of Amber, and as the Appearance of Fire round about*, Ezek. i. 27. or if it was any other Metal, whether ſimple or compound (for all theſe Things are uncertain) it matters not, ſeeing not the Nature, but the Appearance of it, here is moſt under Conſideration: And this we may be ſure of with little Work, for it appears to have been a moſt clear and beautiful Repreſentation; and pointing at the Feet, is to be meant of the outward Execution of God's Will and Pleaſure in Behalf of his Church, and may comprehend theſe few Things, 1. His Stedfaſtneſs to all his Purpoſes, and therefore his executive Efforts are compared to *Pillars of Braſs*; and, for the ſame Reaſon, his Legs are compared to *Pillars of Marble, ſet in Sockets of Gold*, Song v. 15. He is of one Mind, and who can turn him? 2. His great Patience in waiting for returning Sinners; Braſs moves heavily and ſlowly: Indeed his long-ſuffering Patience is very great, *Fury is not me*, Iſa. xxvii. 4. he waits to be gracious. 3. His terrible Juſtice, when once his Patience comes to an End; for his Feet, being like Braſs, are heavy where they hit, and like burning Braſs very deſtructive, as in the former Citation; *Who would ſet the Briars and Thorns againſt me in Battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together.* 4. It may alſo point at his efficacious Motion in the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, which is irreſiſtible, as he pleaſeth, and will be ſo with a Witneſs, *when he takes to him his great Power, and reigns.*

4. The Emblem of his Voice, *His Voice as the Sound of many Waters.* If by *Waters* we are to underſtand a Multitude of People, as elſewhere in this ſame Prophecy we muſt of Neceſſity, *Rev.* xvii. 15. *The Waters which thou ſaweſt, are Peoples and Multitudes*; this agrees exactly with *Daniel, The Voice of his Words like the Voice of a Multitude*, Dan. x. 6. If it ſhould be ſaid, Then the Noiſe would be very confuſed, for ſuch is the Noiſe of Waters, or the Noiſe of a Multitude; Some are of the Mind this is the Meaning of it, becauſe amongſt the Profeſſors of Chriſt there is a great Diſcrepancy, and a real Confuſion ariſing from their different Thoughts. But, it ſhould be conſidered, the Apoſtle is not ſpeaking of the Voice of the Church, but of the Voice of Chriſt himſelf, which was never confuſed, but moſt diſtinct; and it is ſo in a moſt eminent Manner in the following Epiſtles. Beſides, it is a very wretched Way of applying Emblems, to run the Parallel too cloſe; and eſpecially that the Imperfections of the Figure be attributed to the Truth, which croſſeth all the Rules of ſolid Interpretation: For, is there no more in the Sound of a Multitude, or of Waters, but mere Confuſion? Yes, certainly we ſhall find ſeveral, and moſt applicable to the Purpoſe: As, 1. The Terror of the Noiſe of Caſcads, or of a great Multitude, 'tis very terrible; And ſo is the Voice of Chriſt, *whoſe Voice ſhakes the Earth*, Heb. xii. 26. And indeed, nothing can be more terrible to Sinners: Chriſt's Word, in *Paul's* Mouth, made *Felix* to tremble; and theſe who cleave to their Sins, cannot be brought to hear the ſame, *John* iii. 20. *Every One that doth Evil, hateth the Light; neither cometh to the Light, leſt his Deeds ſhould be reproved.* 2. The diffuſive Nature of this Voice; it goes broad and wide, like the Noiſe of Waters, which cannot be overpowered or ſuppreſſed: This is a Voice goes out to the Ends of the Earth, and it paſſeth the Power of the Gates of Hell to ſilence it; as our Lord ſays, *Many falſe Chriſts, and falſe Prophets ſhall ariſe, and ſhew great Signs and Wonders, inſomuch that (if it were poſſible) they ſhould deceive the very Elect*, Mat. xxiv. 24. 3. The rouzing Nature of this Voice, it will force its Way when Chriſt ſpeaks it; *I ſay unto you, the Hour is coming, and now is, when the Dead ſhall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that hear ſhall live*, John v. 25. All which we ſee clearly agrees to the Voice of Chriſt in the Goſpel. If it ſhould be enquired, How did *John* know this Voice, ſeeing the Words uttered but followed the Viſion? I anſwer, This is a Miſtake, which I am ſurprized to ſee ſeverals go in with; and ſome take a very pitiful Shift to remove the Difficulty, by telling

us it was by Anticipation, and that he wrote this after he had heard what is contained in the following Verſes, tho' he did not hear it in Time of the Viſion itſelf: For, did he not hear the Voice like a Trumpet? which uttered all that we have contained *v.* 11. This is ſufficient to repel both this Difficulty, and that of the Confuſion of the Voice, before-mentioned.

5. The Emblem of the Ornament of his Right-hand, *v.* 16. *He had in his Right-hand Seven Stars.* It was uſual eſpecially for Perſons of Diſtinction, to have Jewels on their Hands; to this the Lord alludes, when he ſays, *Jer.* xxii. 24. *Though* Coniah *the King of* Judah *were the Signet upon my Right-hand.* A gracious Promiſe we have alſo made to *Zerubbabel, I will take thee, and make thee as a Signet,* Hag. ii. 23. And when the Prodigal returned, a Ring was put upon his Finger; and often we read of Bracelets: Now, with Alluſion to theſe Cuſtoms, this ſeems to have been diſcovered to *John.* And the great Ornament of Chriſt, is the *Seven Stars.* I ſhall take for granted here, till I come to the laſt Verſe of the Chapter, that by theſe *Stars* we are to underſtand Miniſters of the Goſpel; and ſhall only here notice, where they are? In *Chriſt's Right-hand*; and not indifferently placed either, for he is ſaid to *hold* them: This caſts up a very lovely Scheme of Chriſt's Care of his Servants, which we ſhall ſhortly view in theſe few Things, 1. The Weakneſs of the beſt of them, if they were not upheld by Chriſt; the Apoſtle owns the Truth of this, while he calls them *Earthen Veſſels.* 2. The Communications of Chriſt's Strength to them; for, they being in his Right-hand, his Strength is made forthcoming to them; and thus they acknowledge, *Our Sufficiency is of God.* 3. They are Inſtruments or Tools in this powerful Hand, and conſequently their Succeſs depends upon the Hand they are in. So, we neglect the Pen, in regard of the Hand that guides it: Thus Chriſt promiſes to his Apoſtles, *I will make you Fiſhers of Men.* 4. They are particular Sharers of Chriſt's Favour, he *holds* them conſtantly in his Right-hand. 5. They are as Ornaments to their great Maſter; So ſays the Apoſtle *Paul,* 2 Cor. viii. 23. *Do any enquire of our Brethren? they are the Apoſtles of the Churches, and the Glory of Chriſt.*

6. The Emblem of his Mouth, *Out of his Mouth went a ſharp two-edged Sword:* The Word rendred *went,* would do better, if turned *goeth*; for the Word notes a continued Motion: There will be little Difficulty to come at the Senſe of this; for nothing is more ordinary, than to deſign the Words of the Mouth, *Swords,* whether the Words be good or bad; for we find even the Words of wicked Men get this Deſignation: And ſo God is ſaid to *ſave the Poor from the Sword, from their Mouth,* Job v. 15. becauſe their Words are killing. Now, if the Words of a Man be deſigned Swords, how much more the Words of Chriſt? And indeed they will be found ſo, whether, 1. For Conviction or Converſion, *Heb.* iv. 12. *The Word of God is quick and powerful, and ſharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the Dividing aſunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joints and Marrow; and is a Diſcerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart.* This Sword proceeds out of *Chriſt's Mouth,* and therefore the whole Efficacy muſt be his; and ſo nothing is to be aſcribed to moral Swaſion, or to the Influence of the Speaker, but only as it is the Word of Chriſt. Hence we have the Energy of the Word of the Goſpel, *viz.* when it is accompanied with the Spirit of Chriſt; and then, yea then only, it becomes effectual in all them that are ſaved. And we may notice a very notable Wound this Way given by the Stroke of this Sword, while it is ſaid, *Acts* ii 37. that after *Peter's* Sermon, *they were pricked in their Hearts.* 2. For the Defence of his People, and the Confuſion of their Enemies. Some incline (I ſhall not ſay how juſtly) to make this the Scope of the Place: I am very ready to allow it to come in for its due Share, which, to be ſure, muſt not be rejected; for we find the ſame Clauſe ſo applied, *Rev.* ii. 16. *Repent, or elſe I will come unto thee quickly, and fight againſt them with the Sword of my Mouth.* And yet more plainly, *Rev.* xix. 15. *Out of his Mouth goeth a ſharp Sword, that with it he ſhould ſmite the Nations.* Where, without Doubt, it is the Sword of Vengeance, of which we have him ſpeaking, *Deut.* xxxii. 42. *Mine Arrows ſhall be drunk with Blood (and my Sword ſhall devour Fleſh) and that with the Blood of the Slain, and of the Captives, from the Beginning of Revenge upon the Enemy.* That this *Sword* is ſaid to come out of his *Mouth,* is, to ſhow what an eaſy Matter it is for God to take Vengeance on his Enemies, and how great Reaſon his People have to truſt in him.

7. And *laſtly,* We have the Emblem of his Aſpect, or the whole of his Countenance, in which the Apoſtle wraps up the Whole of his Appearance, not hitherto touched at, *His Countenance was as the Sun ſhineth in his Strength.* I doubt not, but this Manifeſtation of Chriſt, the Apoſtle was bleſt with, did, in a great Meaſure, reſemble another View he had of him before his Exaltation, *viz.* at the *Transfiguration,* which was certainly a Foretaſte of that bleſſed Viſion the Saints have in Heaven, *Mat.* xvii.

xvii. 2. *He was transfigured before them, and his Face did ſhine as the Sun* But here is an Addition, as the Sun *ſhineth in his Strength*: Not as the Morning-ſun, which is at a Diſtance; nor as the Sun when under a Cloud, for that is faint; far leſs when he is ſetting, which is more languiſhing; but as the Sun in a meridian Height, in a pure and ſerene Air: Which has theſe ſeveral Things wrapt up in it, 1. His great and matchleſs Beauty, and the great Satisfaction there is to behold him, *John* i. 9. *That true Light that enlightneth every Man that cometh into the World.* 2. As looking on the Sun in its Brightneſs, obſcures and darkens all other Objects; ſo theſe, who by Faith look on Chriſt, ſee every other Thing of no Value. 3. The Rays of the Sun thus ſhining, do enſpirit and envigorate theſe under his Influence: And ſo the Pſalmiſt experienced as to Chriſt; wherefore he prays, *Lift up upon us the Light of thy Countenance*: *Thou haſt put more Gladneſs in my Heart, than the Wicked when Corn and Wine increaſed,* Pſal. iv. 6, 7. 4. The Sun in his Strength, has the greateſt Influence and Force with his Rays; ſo here, in a Figure, the Apoſtle had a Diſcovery of that notable Efficacy would attend the brighteſt Diſplay of Chriſt's Preſence in his Church; as we had it long ago by the Prophet, *The Sun of Righteouſneſs ſhall ariſe with Healing in his Wings to ſuch as fear his Name; and they ſhall go forth, and grow up as Calves in the Stall,* Mal. iv. 3. So that, in this Manifeſtation, we have a moſt Goſpel, tho' enigmatical Diſcovery of Chriſt in both his Natures, and as Mediator.

Next, we have the Conſequents of this glorious Manifeſtation, which conſiſt in an Intercourſe of Actions and Expreſſions betwixt our Lord Jeſus Chriſt and his beloved Diſciple, to the Cloſe of the Chapter.

17 And when I ſaw him, I fell at his Feet as dead: And he laid his Right-hand upon me, ſaying unto me, Fear not, I am the Firſt and the Laſt.

18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the Keys of Hell and of Death.

19 Write the Things which thou haſt ſeen, and the Things which are, and the Things which ſhall be hereafter,

20 The Myſtery of the Seven Stars which thou ſaweſt in my Right-hand, and the Seven Golden Candleſticks. The Seven Stars are the Angels of the Seven Churches: And the Seven Candleſticks which thou ſaweſt, are the Seven Churches.

Here we have theſe Conſequents, 1. The Effect of this Viſion upon *John*, *v.* 17. 2. The Comforts adminiſtred to him in this Condition, *v.* 17, 18. 3. The Renewal of a former Commiſſion to publiſh the Viſion, *v.* 19. 4. The Interpretation of two material Parts of the Viſion, *v.* 20.

I. There is the Effect this Viſion had upon *John*, *v.* 17. *When I ſaw him, I fell at his Feet as dead.* This was a ſtrange Effect, and beſpeaks the Divinity of the Cauſe. And further, we may notice how much more forcible the Sight was than the Hearing; it is ſaid, *v.* 12. when he heard the Voice, he turned himſelf to ſee; but now, when he has lookt, and ſeen, he falls proſtrate to the Ground. Some think, all meant here, is, he turned himſelf into a moſt devout Poſture of Worſhip; as we find *Joſhua* did, upon a Divine Manifeſtation, when it is ſaid, *Joſh.* v. 14. *He fell on his Face to the Earth, and did worſhip.* Yet it is not ſaid, he was as One dead: So that, tho' *Joſhua* had a very deep Senſe of this heavenly Viſion, that might have ſtirred up Devotion; yet the Manifeſtation was not ſo glaring, that he became *as One dead.* As this Viſion is much a-kin to what *Daniel* had, ſo the Effect of it upon the Apoſtle was very like what *Daniel* felt: For he ſays, *Dan.* x. 8, 9. *There remained no Strength in me*: *And my Comelineſs was turned into Corruption, and I retained no Strength. And I was in a deep Sleep upon my Face.* We find him in the like Condition upon the Back of another Viſion, *Dan.* viii. 17. *I was afraid, and fell upon my Face*: *And I was in a deep Sleep, and my Face toward the Ground.* At the Transfiguration, we find the Diſciples much the ſame Way affected; for it is ſaid, *Matth.* xvii. 6. *They fell on their Faces, and were ſore afraid.* Now, a deep Sleep is a Reſemblance of Death; and great Fear, in a Manner, kills; yea, ſometimes does actually exanimate. The Apoſtle at that Time was uncapable of any, either natural or rational Act. The Cauſes of this Condition may be theſe;

(1.) The excellent Glory diſcovered, was more than his frail Nature was able to bear up under; and therefore the immediate and bleſſed Viſion is called, *An exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*, 2 Cor. iv. 17. Juſt as the Eye of an Owl is not able to behold the dazling Rays of the Sun, but hides himſelf from the Light; even ſo the beſt of Men cannot bear the naked View of Divine Glory, which extinguiſhes all their Senſes; as ſays One, *This new Wine is too ſtrong for old Bottles.*

(2.) The auguſt Majeſty of the Apparition ſtruck him with ſuch a Fear, as bereſt him of all Compoſure of Thought: As ſaid *Daniel*, I was afraid; ſo, no doubt, here a natural Principle of Fear overcame him to ſuch a Pitch, as he fainted, being unable to bear up; for Fear produces very ſtrange Effects this Way: And it is plain, *John* was in great Fear, from what follows.

(3.) The diſcovered Glory did alſo hit his latent Infirmities, and Contraries never better appear, than when compared: So it was with *Iſaiah*, *Wo is me, for I am undone, becauſe I am a Man of unclean Lips: For mine Eyes have ſeen the King, the Lord of Hoſts*, Iſa. vi. 5. We find the ſame ſaid of *Job*, *I have heard of thee by the Hearing of the Ear, but now mine Eye ſeeth thee; wherefore I abhor my ſelf in Duſt and in Aſhes*, Job xlii. 5, 6. And ſo it was with the Apoſtle *Paul*, Acts ix. 4. *He fell to the Ground.*

(4.) The Satisfaction he might have in ſuch an extraordinary Viſion, might help to produce this; for it is very ordinary for Perſons to faint under a Fit of great Satisfaction: So it was with *Jacob*, They told him, ſaying, *Joſeph is alive, and is Governor over all the Land of* Egypt: *And* Jacob's *Heart fainted*, Gen. xlv. 26. We find the ſame recorded of *Daniel* upon the Back of his Viſion, *I* Daniel *fainted, and was ſick certain Days*, Dan. viii. 27. But now, if it be ſo with Saints, Prophets, and Apoſtles; how ſhall the Wicked be able to bear one Sight of that terrible Majeſty?

II. There are the Comforts adminiſtrate to *John* in this Condition, which are two; 1. A Deed. 2. A Word of Conſolation.

1ſt, He meets with a Deed of Comfort done him in this low Condition, *He laid his Right-hand upon me*: This was a compaſſionate Touch. It is obſerved in Naturals, that when a Perſon is in a deep Sleep, or fainting Fit eſpecially, a loud Cry may turn them out of one Paſſion into another, as dangerous; whereas a gentle Touch recovers the Perſon, and prevents Surprize. Where we may notice, 1. The Inſtrument of this Comfort. 2. The Application thereof.

(1.) The Inſtrument, *His Right-hand.* This is what *Daniel* met with, *Behold, a Hand touched me*, Dan. x. 10. but here it is expreſſed the *Right-hand.* We ſaw, *v.* 16. that Hand held the ſeven Stars, which are his Miniſters, to ſhew us that all Goſpel-comfort is to be expected in a due Diſpenſation of Goſpel-ordinances. But there is further, in this, theſe Things remarkable, 1. This was a diſtinguiſhing Caſt of Mercy, being a Touch with the Right-hand, for the Sheep are placed there: So *David* ſays, Thou ſaveſt by thy Right-hand, *and thy Right-hand holdeth me up*, Pſal. lxiii. 8. 2. The laying on of the Right-hand, was a Form of Bleſſing; ſo, when *Jacob* bleſſed *Ephraim*, *He laid his Right-hand on him*, Gen. xlviii. 14. 3. It was uſed in the Deſignation to an Office, which we find often through the Scripture: And juſt ſo *John*, who had been honoured with the Apoſtolate, is now to receive a new Miſſion, *viz.* that of a Prophet, to convey to lateſt Ages the Knowledge of what is to come.

(2.) The Application thereof, *He laid it on me*; originally, *he put it on me*, in a careful and kindly Manner: *He touched me*, ſaid *Daniel*, Dan. viii. 18. It was not a violent Blow, but an eaſy and gentle Touch, to ſtabliſh and ſupport; as we are ready to clap our Hand to any Thing we regard, that is tottering or in Hazard.

2dly, We have the Word of Conſolation. Where, 1. Is the Word of Comfort itſelf. 2. The Grounds of this Conſolation.

1. The Word of Comfort, *Fear not.* It is noted, that this Conſolation occurs in Scripture above Sixty Times, and ordinarily upon the Back of Manifeſtations. It is the ſame Word came to *Daniel*, Dan. x. 12. *Fear not, Daniel.* It is very plain all Fear is not forbid, but an exceſſive Fear, which diſturbs the Mind; for there are ſeveral bad Effects of ſuch a Fear, 1. It is ready to make Believers miſtake: When Chriſt was walking upon the Waters, Fear made them miſtake their Maſter for a Ghoſt; therefore he ſaid unto them, *It is I, be not afraid.* 2. It locketh up the Senſes, ſo that they can neither hear nor ſee diſtinctly what paſſeth; which was a moſt improper Frame for *John*, at this Time eſpecially. 3. It diſables to ſet about commanded Duties; the Apoſtle was as if he had been dead.

2. There

2. There are the Grounds of this Comfort in what followeth, all of them taken from the Nature of the Comforter, *1ſt*, From his Deity. *2d*, From his Redemption-work. *3d*, From his great Power and Authority.

1ſt Ground of Conſolation is from his Deity, *I am the Firſt and the Laſt.* This we explained on *v.* 8. It is the moſt ſolid Ground of Comfort, becauſe it removes our Fear, upon the eſtabliſhed Foundations of God's Faithfulneſs and Immutability: Thus the *Pſalmiſt* comforts himſelf, *Pſal.* xxiii. 1. *The Lord is my Shepherd, I ſhall not want.*

2d Ground of Comfort is from his Redemption-work, *I am he that liveth, and was dead, and am alive for evermore.* But ſtrictly, it ſhould be rendered, *I am the Living, was made dead, and am living for evermore.* Where, 1. He deſcribed his preſent State, *I am the Living*: Which is not to be underſtood of his Life as God; for, as to that, he was both impaſſible and immortal: But it is to be meant of that Life he had, when he ſpoke to *John* upon the Back of his Reſurrection, and glorious Aſcenſion; when all the Three compounding Parts of his Mediatory Perſon were reunited, the rational Soul to the organized Body, and both to the Divine Nature. Of this Life it is we have the Pſalmiſt ſpeaking, *Pſal.* xxi. 4. *He asked Life of thee, and thou gaveſt him, even Length of Days for ever and ever.* And this Life may comprehend alſo his Exerciſe now at the Right-hand of God; for *he ever liveth to make Interceſſion for us*, Heb. vii. 25. This Life is alſo to be oppoſed to that Life he had in the Days of his Miniſtry upon Earth, when he had a *Life of Sorrows, and was acquainted with Grief.* There could no greater Comfort reach *John*, nor indeed any Believer, than to know that *their Redeemer liveth*, and is imployed about them. 2. He deſcribes himſelf from his paſt State, *I was dead*: This comprehends not only his Death upon the Croſs, but his whole State of Humiliation; and, by this, he points himſelf out to *John* as clearly, as before he had done to *Thomas* that felt his Wounds. Here was great Matter of Conſolation to him, to know it was no other but his old beloved and loving Maſter, on whoſe Breaſt he had many a Time leaned, without Fear or Conſternation. 3. He returns upon his Life after Death, to declare the Nature of it, *I am living for evermore.* This plainly proves his Sufferings were ſatisfying; no more was required of him, no more was neceſſary to ſecure Salvation to his People, than what he did, firſt when he aſſumed our Nature: Tho' he lived, yea, and was in his own natural Structure out of the Reach of a natural Death, yet, by the Decree of God, he was bound over to a very violent and curſed Death: But now, he had alſo brought himſelf above that; *For in that he died, he died unto Sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God*, Rom. vi. 10. This is a moſt ſure Ground of Hope: For Chriſt having both died and lived again for his People, being alive, he was to be the Author of Life to them; and therefore he ſays, *Becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo*, John xiv. 19. He is to all his own alſo, not only the Firſt-fruits of them that ſlept, but the main Cauſe, both meritorious and efficient, of their Reſurrection. And thus the Comfort proceeds, in the Terms of the Apoſtle, *Rom.* v. 10. *If, when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we ſhall be ſaved by his Life.* And, *laſtly*, We have the Confirmation of all this, in the hearty Approbation, *Amen.* This I cannot think to be the Apoſtle's, tho' no Doubt he would add his to it, but it is ſubjoined by Chriſt himſelf; and ſo it declares, both the Truth of the Thing, and his own Pleaſure and Satisfaction in it.

3d Ground of Comfort is from his Power and Authority, *I have the Keys of Hell and of Death.* Keys, in Scripture, are ſtill an Emblem of Power and Truſt. This is evident from the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. xxii. 21, 22. *I will commit thy Government into his Hand——. And the Key of the Houſe of* David *will I lay upon his Shoulder.* And when Chriſt is committing Truſt to his Apoſtles, he uſeth the ſame Form, *Matth.* xvi. 19. *I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.* The plain Truth of all this, we have from our Lord's own Words, *Matth.* xxviii. 18. *All Power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth.* And the like in that ſolemn Prayer of his, *John* xvii. 2. *Thou haſt given him Power over all Fleſh.* But here we read not of Heaven and Earth (however theſe muſt be included, as is clear from the Scriptures above-adduced) but *Hell and Death*; the Meaning of which is diſputed by ſome, who contend that the Order of the Words are inverted, and would read it Death and Hell, according to the vulgar Tranſlation. Others, by *Hell*, underſtand only the *Grave.* In my humble Opinion, theſe are all but Triflings; for we know well, that the Order obſerved in Scripture does not always eſtabliſh the natural Order of the Things; ſome Things are firſt named, that fall laſt out. We will meet with abundance of Inſtances, to this Purpoſe, in this Prophecy. Here we conſider them in that Order we find them. As to the firſt, *Hell*, I ſhall be eaſy about the Meaning of it,

ſo it be not reſtrained, as a great many, without Ground, endeavour to do: For, where Scripture does not reſtrict the Senſe of a Word, I reckon it Raſhneſs for any other to do it. I believe, it will be eaſily yielded on all Hands, whatever be the Meaning of *Hell*, it is a Word expreſſing a very ill State, and what is moſt undeſirable in itſelf. And whatever *Grotius* has ſaid to the contrary, I can challenge any to ſhew where the Meaning of it can have any Thing good in it. Sometimes it is taken for the Grave, ſometimes for deep Afflictions: *Jonah* called the Whale's Belly *Hell*. Sometimes it may ſignify the wretched State of Nature; for theſe who are concluded in it, are ſaid to be damned already. But it is owned, that in none of theſe it is properly taken; for, in its ſtricteſt Senſe, it ſignifies the Place of Devils for their ordinary Abode, and of reprobate Souls after Death. I ſee no Reaſon why it may not be taken complexly for all theſe: For it is a plain Truth, Chriſt has the Key of them all, and can ſhut up, and let out, whom and when he pleaſeth. The only Difficulty is about Hell in its moſt proper Senſe; for ſays *Brightman*, *It is never opened, that any be fetched from thence*. Yet it cannot be denied, but we read of the Opening of the Bottomleſs Pit, *Rev.* ix. 1. We read alſo of opening it, and ſhutting up Satan in it, *Chap.* xx. 1. But will not he, and others, allow Chriſt to have the Power of Hell, when we ſee it plain from Scripture? Yea, can we meet with any Doctrine from this Part of the Prophecy, more comfortable than this, That tho' the Devil and his Angels be in Hell, yet they have not the Keys thereof, ſo that they cannot get out without Chriſt's Permiſſion; nor can they carry any with them thither, but whom he gives up to their Power? 2. Death, which may be taken in its moſt proper Senſe; this none controverts is the poſtern Gate of Life, out at which none muſt paſs without his Call, nor can any enter without his Command: This is what God has ever reſerved to himſelf, *Deut.* xxxii. 39. *I kill, and I make alive*. This belongs to Chriſt as Mediator, *For to this End Chriſt both died, and roſe and revived, that he might be Lord both of the Dead and of the Living*, Rom. xiv. 9.

III. There is the Commiſſion to publiſh this Viſion with others, renewed and made more explicite than it was *v.* 11. This 19. *v.* is made the Partition of the whole Prophecy, in three Branches.

1. Of Things paſt, *The Things thou haſt ſeen*; which refers to the immediate preceeding Viſion. Some take this as a Command to write his Goſpel, containing an Abridgment of the Life, Doctrine, and Miracles of Chriſt; which they think was alſo done during his Baniſhment: But whether the One or the other, or both, be meant here, I ſee little Reaſon, on either Side, to ſway a Body; only it is not to be doubted, but Chriſt did deſign the Publiſhing of this firſt Viſion in the Front of the Prophecy: And if we had Reaſon to ſuppoſe his Goſpel was not compoſed at this Time, I ſee not why the Command might not extend to it alſo; for to be ſure he did it at his Command.

2. Of Things preſent, *The Things which are*; this ſeems to point immediately at the State of the ſeven *Aſiatick* Churches, which are deſcribed in the two following Chapters: For, that the neareſt Intendment of theſe Epiſtles did reſpect their then State, ſeems very plain from the Matter of them.

3. Of Things to come, *The Things which ſhall be hereafter*, or, *which ſhall be after theſe*; i. e. what is to ſucceed the preſent Condition of theſe Churches: And then this Part reſpects that Viſion from the Beginning of the fourth Chapter, and forwards.

IV. There is the Interpretation of two material Points in the firſt Viſion, which may be of Uſe to us in the Inveſtigation of ſome Parts of the Prophecy: 1. Of the *Seven Stars*; 2. Of the *Seven Golden Candleſticks*: Both theſe are deſigned by one common Name, *Myſtery*. It would give but little Light to the Underſtanding of the Things themſelves, to expatiate upon the Word *Myſtery*, and the Ways it is taken in Scripture; eſpecially, that the Meaning of it in this Prophecy is ſo very obvious, and is an obſcure Repreſentation of Things, by Figures, Emblems, or dark Words; all which need Explication, before it be comprehended. In this Senſe, the *Seventy*, who knew the Force of the *Greek* Word, tranſlated that of *Daniel*, *Chap.* ii. 28. *There is a God in Heaven that revealeth Secrets* [Myſteries] *i. e.* the Viſions the King had in his Sleep. But we come to conſider thoſe Myſteries ſeparately.

1. The Myſtery of the Seven Stars, which are interpreted to be *the Angels of the Seven Churches*. The Word *Star*, comprehends the Myſtery; and the Word *Angels*, is the Interpretation thereof: So that, when we put all together, the Senſe of the Propoſitions is, The Seven Stars ſignify the Angels of the Churches; or more ſhortly, *Stars* ſignify *Angels*. This is the moſt plain and naked Import of the Words, nor is it oppoſed by any; but Papiſts, having juſt Apprehenſions of the Danger their beloved Doctrine

of

of Tranſubſtantiation is in, flee to a Metaphor in the Viſion: A pitiful Shift! which muſt certainly land in One of Two; either that *John* was deceived as to theſe Emblems, or elſe that he did not honeſtly write the true Account of what he ſaw: The firſt is downright Blaſphemy, and the other is not much ſofter. Now, that the Subſtantive *is*, or *are*, muſt needs be taken for *ſignify*, is plain from Abundance of Paſſages, *Gen.* xli. 26, 27. *The ſeven good Kine are ſeven Years: The ſeven good Ears are ſeven Years*, &c. *Ezek.* xxxvii. 11. *Theſe Bones are the whole Houſe of* Iſrael. But here the Difficulty is not over, for there is very much Strife about *Angel*; for ſome contend they are to be meant of heavenly Angels, imployed by Jeſus Chriſt to ſuperintend the Churches. We do indeed read of Angels ſent from Heaven to inſtruct *John*, and others of God's Servants on Earth, upon ſpecial Emergents; but nowhere, that ever a Man was ſent with a Word of Inſtruction to heavenly Angels. Beſides, how can we think that many Expreſſions in theſe Epiſtles can be, with any Truth, applied to holy Angels; particularly, *Rev.* ii. 4. *Thou haſt left thy firſt Love.* The proper Import of the Word *Angel*, and its Uſe amongſt the Prophets, will clear the Meaning of it. *Angel* ſignifies no more or leſs than a Meſſenger, and is of the very ſame Import with *Apoſtle*; and may therefore indifferently be applied to Men on Earth when imployed in God's Errands, and to the heavenly Hoſt. And, in this Senſe, we have the *Jewiſh* Prieſts deſigned Angels, *Mal.* ii. 7. *The Prieſts Lips ſhould keep Knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the Law at his Mouth: For he is the Meſſenger* [Original, *Angel*] *of the Lord.* The Conſideration of this, and ſome other Reaſonings to the ſame Purpoſe, has brought the moſt Part of Expoſitors to agree in this, that by *Angels* here we are to underſtand Church-Officers. But theſe who ſet up to defend and ſupport the Prelatical Subordination of Miniſters, would engroſs the whole of this Character, not to the Parochial, but the Dioceſian Biſhops; and then they read, the *ſeven Stars* are *ſeven Biſhops*: But their Haſte makes them blunder; for it is not ſaid, the ſeven Stars are the ſeven Angels of the Churches, but ſimply, the ſeven Stars are the Angels of the ſeven Churches, *i. e.* they repreſent all the Miniſters of all the Churches. Beſides, *Angel* is a Character can belong to none of their Biſhops, whoſe main Work is to govern; whereas the chief Reaſon of the Name *Angel*, being impoſed on Miniſters, is to repreſent their great Work to ly in carrying Meſſages from God to his People: This is a Task few of the Hierarchical Biſhops trouble themſelves with; yea, their Life-guard tell us plainly, It is none of their Work.

'Tis very evident here, the Spirit of God is not pointing at ſome Miniſters more eminent in Degree and Juriſdiction than others; but it is extended generally to all Miniſters, without Diſtinction: Nor, as was noted, are they *numbred*, but in Bulk deſigned *Angels*: Nor can any Reaſon be aſſign'd, why they are not numbred as well as the Churches, if every Church had but One Angel; but of this more afterwards.

It will be found this is no ill-choſen Emblem of Miniſters, when they are called *Stars*; and that becauſe of theſe Things which make up the Analogy. (1.) A Star is a luminous Body, and of different Sizes; For *one Star differs from another Star in Glory*; yet all of them are little, when compared with the Sun. So it is required of Miniſters, they ſhould be apt to teach: They differ from other in the Degree of their Gifts, as well as in the Quality of their Gifts; but all of them are ſmall, and inconſiderable, when compared with Jeſus Chriſt the true Sun of Righteouſneſs.

(2.) Stars are ſet on high, and are fixed, except a few, who alſo keep a regular Courſe in their proper Orbs, to teach the Dignity of the Office of Miniſters, and their conſtant Duty to ſhine and give Light: Thus our Lord told his Apoſtles, *Mat.* v. 14. *Ye are the Lights of the World*; nor muſt they wander.

(3.) Stars are glorious Bodies, and keep always their priſtin Beauty; which ſhews that Miniſters ſhould be well ſeaſoned with the Light of the glorious Goſpel, and ſhould adhere ſtedfaſtly thereto; elſe they are but fallen Stars, not only uſeleſs, but noxious.

(4.) Stars ſhine only in the Night; for, as ſoon as the Sun ariſeth, they diſappear. They are uſeful for Travellers both by Sea and Land: So Miniſters great Work is to guide and pilot God's People through all the dark and difficult Steps of this Life, till they be fairly landed in *Emmanuel*'s Land; And then, when they are admitted to behold the Sun of Righteouſneſs, immediately there is no further Uſe for them.

We would alſo a little ſee, why Goſpel-Miniſters are deſigned Angels, which may be no leſs neceſſary to know than the other: The Ground of this, we offer in theſe few Particulars, 1*ſt*, Becauſe God employs them as his Ambaſſadors and Meſſengers, to carry the Notices of his Will to the Children of Men; and therefore, they are not to deliver their own, but their Maſter's Mind, and bring Inſtructions for what they ſay, 1 *Cor.* v. 20. *We are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt.*

2*dly*, They are to meddle with no other Buſineſs, but what they are ſent about; a ſlothful Meſſenger is the ſame with One that imploys his Time in what concerns not his preſent Work: Worldly Greatneſs, and Civil Offices, ill become any who pretend to be Angels of Chriſt's ſending; for they are only to meddle with the Affairs of his Kingdom, which is not of this World.

3*dly*, They are to be like the Angels in Purity and Holineſs, both for their own Salvation, and that it may be known to whom they belong; and eſpecially, that they overthrow not more by their Practice, than they can build in the Diſcharge of their Office.

4*thly*, They ſhould be received as Angels for their Maſter's Sake, and for their Work; theſe who deſpiſe them will be ſure to ſmart for it. We find how fond the *Galatians* were of *Paul* at the firſt; ſays he, *Ye received me as an Angel of God*, Gal. iv. 14.

2. The Myſtery of the *Seven Golden Candleſticks*, which are interpreted to be *the Seven Churches*. We read of a Golden Candleſtick which *Moſes* made at the Command of God, *Exod.* xxv. 36. with Six Branches, to ſtand in the Tabernacle: But, it would be noticed, that Candleſtick was but One, and the Branches Six; whereas here there is Mention of Seven diſtinct Candleſticks; and therefore, without ſtraining, I ſee little can be brought from the one to clear the other. The ſame is to be ſaid as to that Viſion of the Prophet *Zechariah*, Zech. iv. 2. becauſe that Candleſtick is but One, tho' it have Seven Lamps, and Seven Pipes. Our Lord's Expoſition of it is certainly the beſt, *viz.* The Seven Candleſticks are, or ſignify the Seven Churches; and that for theſe Reaſons, 1. Candleſticks are but dark Bodies in themſelves, and can give no Light, but are Receivers of the Light, and fit to retain and hold it; and ſo God is ſaid, *to have ſet in the Churches, firſt Apoſtles, ſecondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers*, 1 Cor. xii. 28. 2. Tho' the Candleſtick has no Light in itſelf, yet it makes the Light ſet thereon more beneficial to others, than otherwiſe it would be: *Men do not light a Candle to ſet it under a Buſhel, but on a Candleſtick, and it giveth Light to all that are in the Houſe*, Mat. v. 14. 3. As the Church would be dark without Miniſters, ſo Miniſters cannot give Light but while in the Church; and ſo a Candle under a Buſhel, is *Miniſters removed into Corners*. 4. As the Candleſtick ſupports the Candle, that it may be uſeful, ſo alſo the Churches are to ſupport their Miniſters: Yet is not all this to be underſtood ſo, as if the Miniſters were no Part of the Church, or that Chriſtians could not deſerve the Character of a Church without Miniſters for the ſhorteſt Time; ſuch Notions would ſtretch the Emblem beyond its juſt Limits, whereas 'tis only deſigned to ſhew the Relation betwixt the Churches and their Miniſters.

Nor may we paſs the Conſideration of the Metal theſe Candleſticks are ſaid to be made of, which, among other Things, may contain, in its Notion, theſe few Properties all the Churches of Chriſt ſhould endeavour to be poſſeſt of; 1. Their Purity; for Gold is the pureſt of all Metals. 2. Their Simplicity; that, with Sincerity, is the greateſt Beauty of a Church. 3. They are to be eaſily formed for their Maſter's Uſe; Gold is one of the moſt ductile Metals. 4. They are ever ready to be tried without Loſs; for ſuch is the Nature of pure Gold. 5. The Value God puts upon his Churches; and ſo he compares them to the fineſt Metal.

Follows next the ſecond Part of this firſt Viſion, which is abſolved in Seven ſeveral Epiſtles to the Churches of *Aſia*, in the ſecond and third Chapters. Nor ſhall I meddle with the periodical Interpretation thereof: Not but that I think the Contents of theſe Letters do concern all Churches to the End of the World; but, how to ſatisfy myſelf, or any other, about either the Truth or Limits of theſe Periods, I find not. I ſhall, however, overly touch at theſe Things in them that ſeem to have a further View than that Time wherein they were written; nor ſhall I paſs theſe Paſſages that bind them down to that Period of the Church wherein our Apoſtle flouriſhed. And ſo I go on to

CHAP. II.

THE general Diviſion of this Chapter is obvious: For it contains Four of the Seven Epiſtles; whereof the Firſt is directed to the Church of *Epheſus*, and conſiſts (as does all the reſt) of Three Parts; the Inſcription, *v.* 1. the Body of the Epiſtle, to *v.* 7. and the Concluſion.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE I.

1 UNto the Angel of the Church of Epheſus write, Theſe Things ſaith he that holdeth the Seven Stars in his Right-hand, who walketh in the Midſt of the Seven Golden Candleſticks.

The Inſcription exhibites, 1. To whom this Epiſtle is directed. 2. Who it is that ordered this Letter to be thus directed.

I. To whom it is ſent. Where, 1. The Perſon. 2. The Place.

1. The Perſon, *the Angel of the Church.* I proved above, that by Angels we are to underſtand Church-officers or Miniſters: But, becauſe it is here directed to *One* Angel, ſome contend, it muſt certainly point at the *Dioceſi an* or Biſhop of this whole Church, and conſequently all the other Miniſters or Preybyters were in Subjection under him. To this I reply, 1. If all the Miniſters of this Church be deſigned Biſhops, then this Fancy will fall of itſelf; but this is very evident: For the Apoſtle *Paul ſent to Epheſus, and called the Elders of that Church,* Acts xx. 17. theſe certainly were their Miniſters or Paſtors; and, it is as certain, there were a Plurality of them: And, when they come, he gravely exhorts them, and, among other Directions, he bids them, *v.* 28. *Take Heed to all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you Overſeers;* Originally *Biſhops.* Will not this deſtroy the Notion of a Dioceſian, whereof there can be but One in one City, according to their own Principles? Yet here are *many,* at leaſt *ſeverals*; and therefore, it follows of Courſe, this Letter is directed to them all, in this ſingle Compellation, *Angel,* which will conſtitute this Word a *Collective*; elſe they muſt ſay, there were a Sett of Men contradiſtinguiſhed from this Angel and the Body of the Church, and that that Sett of Men were deſigned by the Holy Ghoſt, *Elders* and *Biſhops,* as above; and yet neither be expreſſed by the Angel nor the Church, that is to ſay, are neither repreſented by the Stars, nor by the Candleſtick: Not by the Stars, for they, according to Chriſt's Interpretation, did only ſignify the Angels; and if theſe *Elders* and *Biſhops* were not included in the *Angel,* then the Star could be no Emblem of them: And as little are they comprehended in the Candleſtick, for the Church conſiſts but of Two Parts, the Officers and the People; when the Officers are repreſented by the Emblem of *Stars,* and the Church by that of a *Candleſtick,* then are the Officers thus diſtinguiſhed from the Church, and the Church from her Officers; and conſequently there is no Repreſentation of theſe Elders or Biſhops the Apoſtle *Paul* exhorted. 2. 'Tis moſt preſumable, that this Word *Angel* is a *Collective,* and ſo comprehends all the Miniſters of this Church, and are ſo deſigned in the ſingular Number, to point out the Oneneſs of their Work, and the Harmony ſhould be in their Minds: As alſo, becauſe what is contain'd in this Epiſtle, concerns every particular Miniſter, and all of them in common. 3. This Epiſtle (as all the reſt) tho' immediately inſcribed to the Miniſters of the Church, yet concerns the whole Church, yea, is directed to them in the Concluſion of this ſame Epiſtle, where the Spirit is ſaid to *ſpeak to the Churches,* as well as to the *Angels* in the Beginning. 'Tis therefore ſent to the *Miniſters,* who publiſh and preach the Doctrines of God to their People; which the *Biſhops,* who, for Diſtinction's Sake, are called *Dioceſian,* diſown to be their Work, as is plain from their Writings. And hence, I think, I may fairly conclude, theſe towering Biſhops are not at all comprehended in this Emblem of the *Stars,* nor conſequently in the Interpretation *Angels.*

2. There is the Place where this Angel and Church reſided, *Epheſus.* It was reckoned the principal City of *Leſſer Aſia,* and lies in the Weſt-Side of it, of a beautiful Situation, and fertile Soil. It was noted for Idolatry, eſpecially the famous Temple of *Diana, Acts* xviii. It lay neareſt to *Patmos* of any of the Seven. As for other Conceits about the Name, which the *Periodiſts* ſcan to the utmoſt, I wave, being both barren and uncertain.

II. Who ordered this Letter to be ſo directed, *He that holdeth the Seven Stars in his Right-hand, who walketh in the Midſt of the Seven Golden Candleſticks*: And the Apoſtle *John* is commanded to write it. I have explained all this above, *Chap.* i. 13, 16. and ſhall abſolve it now in a few Notes.

1. This is now the third Time *John* is ordered to write; twice in general to all the ſeven Churches, and now in particular to this Church of *Epheſus*: And, no Doubt, this is done to impreſs that Church, and by them all the Churches of the World, with the Neceſſity of the Contents, and the Danger of neglecting what is therein required.

2. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, like a wiſe Maſter-houſhold, gives a diſtinct and particular Portion to every One, exactly fitted to their Neceſſities, and their preſent Caſe: So ſometimes he humbles the Proud by the Fear of Judgments; he raiſes up the Dejected with Cordials; he directs the Undetermined by plain Rules; he puſhes forward the Negligent with a Whip or a Spur.

3. It is to be acurately obſerved, that always Chriſt is pleaſed to diſcover himſelf by ſome, one or mo, of the Emblems appeared to *John* in the Viſion; neither does he uſe them in that ſame Order *John* had deſcribed them, but they are pickt out ſo, as may beſt ſerve the Purpoſe, and anſwer the Scope of every Epiſtle. The Two that are uſed here, repreſent his Preſence, with Care of, and Authority over the Church; than which nothing could be more proper, when he is to challenge their ſecret Faults, direct them to Reformation, and threaten to unchurch them, if they neglected.

4. That here he is ſaid to *walk* in the Midſt of the Candleſticks, it is ſo far from giving Countenance to the Notions of the *Ubiquitarians*, that it downright deſtroys them. If we would ſay, One is everywhere-preſent, and yet, at the ſame Time, alledge he walks in ſuch a Place, the one does manifeſtly cut the Throat of the other. But, indeed, what I take to be the Meaning of this *Walking* is, Chriſt's ſpiritual Care, Inſpection and gracious Aſſiſtance; and ſo it denotes his ſpiritual, and not his bodily Preſence, *For the Heavens muſt contain him till the End.*

Follows the Body of the Epiſtle, to *v.* 7.

2 I know thy Works, and thy Labour, and thy Patience, and how thou canſt not bear them which are evil: And haſt tried them which ſay they are Apoſtles, and are not; and haſt found them Liars:

3 And haſt born, and haſt Patience, and for my Name's Sake haſt laboured, and haſt not fainted.

4 Nevertheleſs, I have *ſomewhat* againſt thee, becauſe thou haſt left thy firſt Love.

5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy firſt Works; or elſe I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candleſtick out of his Place, except thou repent.

6 But this thou haſt, that thou hateſt the Deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I alſo hate.

In the Body of this Epiſtle, we have, 1. The Foundation or Ground-wall of all the Parts thereof, *viz.* The Omniſcience of Chriſt. 2. By Vertue thereof, he acquaints this Church with what is commendable in her, *v.* 2, 3. 3. From the ſame Ground he advertiſes her, wherein ſhe is culpable, *v.* 4. 4. He directs to Amendment, with a Certification, *v.* 5. 5. He extenuates the Guilt of this Church, from a particular Conformity to his Mind.

I. There is the Ground-wall of this, and indeed of all the other Epiſtles, the *Omniience* of Chriſt, *I know thy Works.* It is hard to make this either a Knowledge of Approbation or Condemnation, as ſome would perſwade. 'Tis plainly Chriſt's aſſerting his perfect Knowledge of all Things, and his narrow Obſervation of the Carriage of his Churches, in all their Actions, good or bad, ſecret or open, outward or inward, paſt or preſent, *Heb.* iv. 13. *For all Things are naked and open to the Eyes of him, with whom we have to do.* For this End, he walks among the Candleſticks, that he may diſpenſe Reproofs, Conſolations, or Exhortations, as they ſtand in Need: And therefore it is ſaid, *Pſal.* xi. 4. *His Eyes behold, his Eye-lids try the Children of Men.* This diſcovers to us, 1. The Divinity of the Speaker; for, if he knew all the Works of his Church, yea of all the Churches, and that at all Times, then he muſt be God, becauſe *Omniſcience* is only proper to God. 2. The Duty of Miniſters, to inculcate this Doctrine faithfully and frequently. 3. The Equity and Juſtice of the Sentence that he paſſeth, being founded upon an infallible Knowledge.

II. We have what is commendable in this Church, *v.* 2, 3. And their good Qualities are, 1. Mentioned. And, 2. Exemplified.

1. Theſe commendable Things are mentioned. Tho' I ſhall not refuſe a Part of them may be to the Praiſe of the People; yet it will appear, that chiefly they belong to the Rulers and Miniſters of the Church.

(1.) *They*

(1.) *They labour*: This is a Word often applied to Miniſters in the Diſpenſation of the Word, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 12. *Know them which labour among you*: And therefore Miniſters are deſigned *theſe who labour in the Word and Doctrine*, 1 Tim. v. 17. None knows better the Labour and Toil of that Exerciſe, than theſe who have conſcientiouſly imployed themſelves therein: Yet even this is not the ſole Work of Miniſters, for Parents and Maſters are bound to exerciſe themſelves that Way; yea, every One is to be aſſiſtant to his Neighbour, as he has Opportunity and Ability, *Col.* iii. 16. *Let the Word of Chriſt dwell in you richly, in all Wiſdom, teaching and admoniſhing one another.* This alſo may reſpect the Working out of their own Salvation, a Duty equally binding upon Miniſters and private Chriſtians; for all are called *to be ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord*, 1 Cor. xv. 58.

(2.) *Thy Patience*: To be exerciſed in Duty. We are to *be patient in Well-doing*, towards the weak and infirm, *Rom.* xv. 1. *Bear the Infirmities of the weak*; and under Croſſes or Perſecution.

(3.) Their Zeal: *And canſt not bear with them that are Evil*; Either ſo in their Practice, *who walk diſorderly*; or are ſo in their Principle: We have a Caution againſt both theſe, by the Apoſtle, *Phil.* iii. 1. *Beware of Dogs, beware of evil Workers, beware of the Conciſion.*

2. We ſee theſe Three exemplified and cleared by Inſtances in a retrograde Manner, beginning with the laſt, and ſo going backward.

1*ſt*, The Inſtance of their Zeal is, *Thou haſt tried them which ſay they are Apoſtles and are not, and haſt found them Liars.* Concerning their Zeal, we may note theſe Things, 1. The Perſons againſt whom they directed it; theſe *who ſaid they were Apoſtles*, i. e. falſe Apoſtles, of which there were Plenty in the primitive Church, whom *Paul* calls, *Deceitful Workers, transforming themſelves into the Apoſtles of Chriſt*, 2 Cor. xi. 13. Who theſe were, is hard to determine: Some think it was *Cerinthus* and *Ebion*, who, 'tis thought, flouriſhed about this Time; they nibbled at the Deity of our Lord, and contended for an earthly Kingdom to him: The great Name of an Apoſtle did not ſcar this Church to conveen theſe before them, whoever they were. 2. We have their Procedure, *Thou haſt tried them.* To be ſure this was by the written Word, for by this we are allowed to try the Spirit, 1 *John* iv. 1. *Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits.* The true Apoſtles allowed themſelves to be tried, *Gal.* i. 8. *If we or an Angel from Heaven ſhould preach another Goſpel, let him be accurſed.* This is a ſure Mark the Pope is at leaſt a Part of *Antichriſt*, becauſe he will not be tried by the Word of God. 3. We ſee their Deciſion, *Haſt found them Liars*, i. e. convicted them, and, as ſuch, condemned them: They found their Doctrine falſe, and their Call forged. This is a Bleſſing God uſually beſtows upon his Servants, in the conſcientious Diſcharge of their Duty.

2*dly*, The Inſtance of their Patience, *Haſt born, and haſt Patience.* Some think, by the firſt, *haſt born*, we are to underſtand that Oppoſition and theſe Reproaches were caſt upon them by the falſe Apoſtles; for that is the conſtant Uſe of falſe Teachers, to reſiſt and beſpatter. And by the ſecond, their equal and ſtayed Frame of Spirit under the Perſecutions of *Domitian.*

3*dly*, The Inſtance of their Labour, *For my Name's Sake thou haſt laboured, and haſt not fainted*: Where are three Excellencies of their Labour, 1. The Singleneſs of their Aim, *For my Name's Sake*; not for By-ends or ſiniſtruous Deſigns. 2. Their Painfulneſs without wearying, *thou haſt laboured.* And, 3. Their Conſtancy, *and haſt not fainted*, for any Thing they had met with.

III. There is Chriſt's Challenge to this Church, *v.* 14. Hitherto we have ſeen ſome beautiful Draughts of a *Virgin-Church*, which we may well believe to be true, ſeeing he who knows all Things has told it. But, as bright as this Church is, ſhe is not all of a Piece; nay, I am ready to believe the two laſt Verſes reſpect the Time paſt, and this is deſigned to diſcover her, as ſhe was when this Letter was written to her. It is not enough to begin well, if there be not a Continuing in Well-doing. This Verſe opens a very black Scene, and diſcovers ſomething very unlike her former Practice; where we ſhall a little conſider, 1. The Tranſition. 2. The Challenge. 3. The Ground of it.

1. There is a Tranſition from what was moſt commendable, to what is highly culpable, in the Adverſative, *Nevertheleſs*, or *But*, as it is uſually rendered. Many Perfections in a Perſon or Church, will not hinder Chriſt to obſerve a notable Imperfection; and therefore we ſhould ſtudy univerſal Conformity to God.

2. The Challenge, *I have ſomewhat againſt thee*, or, I have againſt thee. It is a Half-Expreſſion, and he would rather have them gueſs it, as tell them of it. Yet, I am of the Mind, ſomething harder ſhould be underſtood, than what our Tranſlators

have ſupplied the Text with; which I infer from the terrible Certification contained in the next Verſe: But, whether it ſhould be *Controverſy*, or *Diſpleaſure*, or *Anger*, or ſome ſuch, I ſhall not be poſitive.

3. The Ground of this Challenge, *Becauſe thou haſt left thy firſt Love.* It is not ſaid this Church had *no Love*, elſe there had not been a Diſtinction between the firſt and after Love; and ſo to leave the firſt Love, is not to caſt off Love altogether: Nor yet is it to be underſtood of the Object of Love, that they had carried their Affections off from God, and ſet them upon another Object unworthy of them; but it ſeems to point at the Degree of their Love, they were more remiſs in the Exerciſe of it, than they wont to be, *i. e.* they had fallen from the firſt, pureſt and ſtrongeſt Degree of Love; ſuch a Love as the Prophet calls *The Love of Eſpouſals*, Jer. ii. 2. *viz.* the Love which they exerciſed at their firſt Covenanting with him. And ſo it will comprehend theſe few Things;

(1.) A Falling from theſe Duties, wherein the moſt fervent Love to Chriſt appeared; and theſe Duties to Man, wherein the Fervour of brotherly Love conſiſts: *i. e.* Their Zeal was conſumed about outward Reformation, more than the inward Conformity of the Heart to the Will of God; which wants not a great Spice of Hypocriſy.

(2.) That their Chriſtian Compaſſion with the Cauſe of God and his People was much abated, as if Care of Self had extinguiſhed theſe higher Cares.

(3.) A Decay of the Manner of doing Duties, without that Warmth that ſometimes they had: The external Performance might continue, but the inward Vigour and Sprightlineſs be cooled; as it is ſaid, *The Love of many waxeth cold.*

IV. There is a compaſſionate Direction in order to their Recovery, with a heavy Certification if they ſlighted it; both *v.* 5.

1. A *Direction*, of ſeveral Branches; this cannot miſs to be a *Catholicon* for the dangerous Diſtemper of this Church, yea and to all other Churches that are, or may be in her deplorable Condition, ſeeing it is preſcribed by the All-wiſe and Almighty Phyſician. We have it in ſeveral Steps.

(1.) Conſideration: *Remember from whence thou art fallen*, i. e. Conſider and compare thy former with thy preſent State.

(2.) Repentance: *Repent*; which follows upon the other, and includes Remorſe, and a Change of Affections and Actions.

(3.) Reformation: *Do thy firſt Works.* The Senſe many give of this is, *Exerciſe thy firſt Love*; but I muſt be allowed to ſay, They forget this is a Direction, and muſt therefore differ from the Thing, as the Means does from the End. That there ſhould be a Connexion betwixt them is neceſſary, but it is certainly unreaſonable to make an Identity: The Meaning then ſeems plainly to be this, Reform by the firſt Rule, i. e. the *Word of God*; write after that Copy. As by the Word of God, accompanied with the Spirit, they were firſt made a pure Church; ſo, by the ſame Method, they muſt recover themſelves: Or, Do thy firſt Works, *q. d.* Give up thy ſelf to the Exerciſe of theſe Three comprehenſive Duties I before commended you for.

2. There is the *Certification*, and a moſt moving Motive it is; where we notice, 1. More generally, their Hazard if this wholſom Advice was neglected. And, 2. More particularly, how he would ſerve them.

(1.) We have the Hazard they were to run in general, if they did fail, *Or elſe I will come unto thee quickly.* Chriſt's Wrath is very fiery, but he is loth to execute it, and therefore ſhews a plain Way of Evaſion in the very Threatning; and, that they might notice it the better, he introduces the Threatning with *or elſe*, or *but if not*, i. e. if ye take not the former Advice. Here we have, 1. The Thing threatned, *I will come unto thee.* Chriſt comes in Mercy to many a Soul, that would otherwiſe never know him at leaſt ſavingly: But this is a wrathful Coming, as is plain from the next Clauſe; and therefore many render it, *I will come againſt thee*; and ſome, *I will attack you* as one Enemy does another. The Pſalmiſt has an Expreſſion to the ſame Purpoſe, *Pſal.* xcvi. 13. *For the Lord cometh, for he cometh to judge the Earth.* And, after the ſame Manner, the Prophet ſpeaks in the Name of the Lord, *Mal.* iv. 6. *Leſt I come and ſmite the Earth with a Curſe.* 2. The Time when, *Quickly*; which plainly ſays, they were not to have much Time to repent, they had need loſe no Time: The Word ſignifies ſuddenly and unexpectedly, *Prov.* xxix. 1. *He that being often reproved, hardneth his Neck, ſhall be deſtroyed ſuddenly, and that without Remedy.*

(2.) He diſcovers more particularly how he would treat them, *I will remove thy Candleſtick out of his Place.* I ſhewed before, that by *Candleſtick* we are to underſtand the *Church*; and ſo, by *Removing the Church*, we are to mean the *Unchurching* of them, *i. e.* to break down their Fences, and make them a Prey to the wild Boar of the Foreſt: And the Addition of theſe Words, *out of his Place*, ſhews it was to be utterly

utterly extirpate, and there ſhould be no Veſtige of that Church in that Place, as, alas! ſhortly fell out after, becauſe they were diſobedient to the heavenly Viſion. If it ſhould be ſaid, This Judgment is threatned againſt the Church for the *Fault* of her *Guides* more than her *own*; I anſwer, No Doubt they were both guilty: And indeed, it muſt be own'd, if once a Miniſtry turn their Back upon the Ways of God, the People will not be long in following them; for it is proverbially true, *Such Prieſt, ſuch People.* The Lord ſhuts up this terrible Threatning with a *Salvo*, if they did not repent; but, if they repented, then the threatned Evil ſhould not overtake them

V. Chriſt extenuates or mitigates the Defection of that Church, by one Particular of great Moment, wherein they acted conformable to his Mind, *v.* 6. yet, it muſt be owned, that the advancing of this Particular does proclaim their Defection to be otherwiſe very great, eſpecially that he takes Notice of nothing elſe in their preſent State; for all he had commended them for above, is advanced in the *Preterit*, but this is in the *Preſent*. This may be alſo dropt as a further Encouragement to them to comply with his Advice, that they were not ſo deeply intangled, as ſome other Churches, and even of the Seven; as we will hear more particularly afterwards, in the Caſe of the Church of *Pergamos*. But, that we may the better underſtand this Extenuation, I ſhall notice in it, 1. The Thing under Conſideration, the Deeds of the *Nicolaitans*. 2. The Carriage or Behaviour of this Church towards the ſame, ſhe *hated* them. 3. Their Conformity therein to Chriſt, which ſwells to their Account in the Commendation.

1. The Thing under Conſideration, *the Deeds of the* Nicolaitans. I own, whatever is written on this Subject, is blended with Uncertainty; nor can it be otherwiſe, ſince we have but a very lame Account of it in Scripture, and very confuſed and inconſiſtent Rumours from Antiquity. We read, *v.* 15. of the *Doctrines* of the *Nicolaitans*, and here of their *Deeds*. So that, both in Practice and Principle, they were Enemies to *Godlineſs*. Some tell us, This Sect had their Denomination from *Nicolas* the *Deacon*, Acts vi. 5. whom we have commended in Scripture: But I think this hard; for it is ſaid, All the Seven were *Men of honeſt Report, and full of the Holy Ghoſt*, Acts vi. 3. Now, to make ſuch a Man the Author of ſuch a damnable Hereſy (as to be ſure theirs was) I think ſavours litlte of a Spirit of Charity. Nor will it mend the Matter, to tell, there was a graceleſs Traitor amongſt the Apoſtles; for we have never one Word to the Commendation of *Judas*, but here we a large Teſtimony in Favours of *Nicolas*. As little will *Grotius* his ſmoothing the Matter do, "That the Error was but ſmall, "as broached by *Nicolas*, but that afterwards it grew up to more Ungolineſs:" For, he owns, that one of the firſt Principles of that Sect, was the *promiſcuous Uſe of Wives*; and that *Nicolas himſelf in ſome Caſes allowed it*: For he ſpeaks without all ſolid Authority; and, while he endeavours to vindicate that honeſt Man, he leaves a terrible Blot upon his Memory, of both *Ignorance* and *Prophanity*: For the firſt, it is not poſſible, he being a conſtant Companion to the Apoſtles, and beſides, full of the *Holy Ghoſt*; and for the other, it is a malicious Calumny. Further, to clear that holy Man from this Aſperſion, it would appear, however that Error had leavened many, yet it was of no long Standing in *John*'s Time; elſe, to be ſure, the *Apoſtles*, in their Letters to the Churches, had taken Notice of it, ſeeing we find they failed not to inveigh againſt *Sectaries* of leſs Note, whenever they appeared: And, by a modeſt Computation, it was above 60 Years betwixt the Ordination of theſe Deacons, and the Writing of this Book; And ſo, I am ready to believe, it was ſome other Perſon of that Name, that flouriſhed long after the *Deacon*. Others again tell us, This Deſignation is not taken from a Perſon, but is a *Riddle*; and that the Word diſcovers the Error, more than the Author: So that theſe Perſons who are carried aſide, are called *Nocalaitans* in *Greek*, or *Balaamites* in *Hebrew*; and, for Ground of this, tell us, that both Words are found in this Chapter, *v.* 14, 15. and ſignify the ſame Thing. This, I confeſs, is a notable Stretch, and not without a good deal of Curioſity. In the Words themſelves, there is indeed a very great Affinity; for *Balaam* ſignifies *Lord of the People*, and *Nicolaus* ſignifies One that *ſubjects the People*: But, as to the Two Verſes where they are both mentioned, the Reading of them may convince any that they are not expreſſive of the ſame, but of different Hereſies. As for the other myſterious Words, as *Armageddon*, &c. they mention to ſupport this Notion, it is plain there is a *Myſtery* in ſome of them; but then the Text tells plainly, when we are to recede from the literal Signification, as in the Word *Armageddon*, which is not to be found here. As there are different Opinions about the *Author* of this *Hereſy*, there are no fewer about its Nature: Nor indeed have we any more Certainty in the one, than the other; except, in the general, we are ſure it was a very damnable One. Some ſay, They were Perſons of ambitious Tempers, and made it their Buſineſs to introduce different Degrees and Orders among Church-Officers; and that the firſt Broacher of this Error was *Diotrephes*, of whom it is

ſaid, *He loved to have the Preheminence*, 3 John *v.* 9, 10. Beſides this, it is ſaid, They were very licentious in their Way of living, that they ſymbolized with Idolaters, *&c.* It muſt be owned, all theſe need better Reaſons to ſupport them, than I have yet ſeen; and therefore we had beſt reſt in the General, for, when we deſcend to Particulars, we loſe ourſelves.

2. What is remarked of the Carriage of this *Church* towards theſe *Hereticks*, we have in Two Branches, 1. They were ſtedfaſt in Oppoſition to them; *This thou haſt*, or, *this thou holds*, i. e. maintains inviolable, and perſiſts in: This was no ſmall Piece of their Praiſe. 2. They *hated their Deeds*. Here they obey the Rule laid down by *Paul*, Rom. xii. 9. *Abhor that which is evil*; and by the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* xcvii. 10. *Hate Ill, all ye that love the Lord.* But there ſeems to be more in it: They not only did *not approve* thereof, and give Diſcoveries of their Diſpleaſure againſt the ſame, by their Sermons, Converſation and Practice (which, however, are all very proper Meaſures to give Check to a growing Error) but there ſeems to be further in this *their Diligence* againſt theſe Errors, they would not tolerate them; but, as they did with the falſe Apoſtles, convеen their Abetters before them, and brought them under ſtrict Inhibitions to diſſeminate theſe Errors. We have here the Ground of a very Chriſtian Diſtinction betwixt the *Perſons* and their *Deeds*; we may, yea muſt *hate* the *Deeds*, when we are forbid to *hate* the *Perſons*, whom we are called to love and compaſſionate, and yet ſet a Mark upon the Perſons for the Sake of their Deeds, in the Courſe of Diſcipline.

3. Their Conformity therein to Chriſt, *Which I alſo hate.* Now, there is a twofold Conformity to Chriſt in hating of Evil: One is *formal*, when we hate it for this Reaſon, becauſe he hates it; *O do not that abominable Thing which I hate.* The other is *material*, when we hate Evil upon ſome other Account, as a clear and diſtinct View of the Falſneſs and Abſurdity of the Thing, without a juſt Regard to the *Divine Averſion* to the Thing, or his *Approbation* of the Contrary. It may be diſputed, which of theſe are to take Place here; I ſhould encline to go in with the firſt: But, I forſee a Difficulty, If they had hated the *Nicolaitans* on this proper Ground, that they were hateful to Chriſt, then they would alſo have hated their own *Defection, and Falling from their firſt Love*, which yet we have no Intimation of; yet this was good in them, that, upon known Principles, they bore Averſion thereto. Follows the Concluſion of this Epiſtle.

7 He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches: To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the Midſt of the Paradiſe of God.

In this we have, 1. An Exhortation. 2. A gracious Promiſe.

I. The Exhortation: And, becauſe it is common to all the Epiſtles, therefore I ſhall conſider it once for all; and therein notice, 1. To whom it is directed. 2. The Object. 3. The Act.

1. The Perſon to whom this Exhortation is directed, *He that hath an Ear*: This is a Call to Attention, our *Apoſtle* learned from his *great Maſter*; or rather, it is our bleſſed Lord making Uſe of that ſame rouzing Call in his State of *Exaltation*, was ſo familiar to him in his *Humiliation*, Mat. xi. 15. & xiii. 9, 43. Mark iv. 9, 23. It informs us, this is a Diſpoſition every One is not bleſſed with. There is an outward Hearing, common to all Mankind, who have the common Senſe of Hearing; this is ſeated in the Head: And there is an *inward* Hearing, which is ſeated in the Heart; *i. e.* where the Ears are bent to Attention by the Strength of the Affections. God gives both; the firſt as *Creator*, the other is given in the *Covenant of Grace*: And ſo we read, *Acts* xvi. 14. *God opened the Heart of* Lydia, *to attend to the Things which were ſpoken of* Paul. It is further ſaid, *Job* xxxiii. 16. *God openeth the Ears of Men, and ſealeth their Inſtruction.* This, then, is a renewed, or an underſtanding Ear, which falls not to the Share of every common Hearer, yet it is what every One ſhould endeavour.

2. The *Object*, or what this underſtanding Ear ſhould liſten to; *What the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches.* Where we are to notice, who ſpeaks, *the Spirit*: This is commonly underſtood of the *Holy Ghoſt*; nor ſhall I much quarrel it, becauſe it is true, and alſo becauſe it is the univerſal Opinion; yet I would have a Caution received here, that our bleſſed Lord be not excluded, either from the Deſignation of the *Spirit*, or of the *Speaker*. I am ſure, we cannot refuſe *him* to be the Speaker in this Place; nor is it foreign from Scripture, that the *Redeemer* be expreſſed by the *Spirit*,

with

with reſpect to his *Divine Nature*; and ſo he is ſaid, *Heb.* ix. 14. to *offer himſelf through the eternal Spirit.* But, becauſe there may be Doubts raiſed about this Text, there is another more expreſs at Hand, 1 *Cor.* xv. 45. *The ſecond Adam was made a quickning Spirit.* However, it is plain, when Chriſt ſpeaks effectually, he ſends his Spirit in; and, by the Word, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, does apply the *Purchaſe of the Son.* Then, conſider to whom he ſpeaks, *to the Churches*; not to this, or that particular Perſon. When God delivered the Law, he ſpoke it to *Moſes*, and the Church had it from him: But what Meſſages come from God under the *Goſpel*, he delivers them to the whole Church; yet, for ordinary, by the Miniſtry of the Angels thereof. And it is the Duty of every particular Member of the Church, to ſue for a Voucher of every Thing delivered, that he may know whether God or Man ſpeaks. But here the Voice is not to one Church, but to all the Churches; not only theſe which were in *John*'s Time, but to all the Churches to the End of the World.

3. The Act or Duty, *Hear*: Such an extraordinary Ear will not have an ordinary Attention: But it will take in its Comprehenſion, 1. To underſtand what is delivered. 2. A due Impreſſion of what is underſtood. 3. An unfeigned Love of what they hear. 4. The proper Graces in Exerciſe, as Faith to believe, Meekneſs to ſubmit, and new Obedience to practiſe.

II. The Promiſe, in the reſt of the Verſe: Where, 1. The Perſon. 2. The Privilege promiſed.

1. The *Perſon* to whom this Promiſe is made, *To him that overcometh*: We no ſooner read this, than there caſt up to us, 1. That he who would enjoy this promiſed Bleſſing, will have *Enemies*, and terrible Ones; theſe are, the Devil, the World, and Sin; theſe Enemies deſign no leſs than our eternal Deſtruction, and they will fight fiercely, cunningly and conſtantly. 2. That he who would have the Promiſe, muſt *fight*; for he may not *flee*, elſe he cannot *overcome*: They muſt fight for Life, for eternal Life; there muſt be no Ceſſation of Arms, much leſs Articles of Peace: He muſt be armed *with the whole Armour of God*; *the Armour of Righteouſneſs on the Right-hand, and on the Left.* Yea, tho' he ſhould receive Wounds, Baffles, &c. yet are they never to lay down their Weapons. 3. The Iſſue of this Engagement, They muſt *Overcome.* A compleat Victory is not to be expected, till Death; *Be thou faithful unto Death.* And thus we find it amongſt the laſt of the Apoſtle's Words, 2 *Tim.* iv. 7. *I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe*: Yet Believers may have partial Victories, and may often foil their Enemies, even in this Life, through the ſeveral Steps of their Chriſtian Courſe, tho' they put not the Adverſary to an intire Rout; *Whatſoever is born of God, overcometh the World*, 1 John v. 4.

2. The Privilege, *I will give to eat of the Tree of Life*, &c. This is, no Doubt, *Emblematical*, and hath Alluſion to that *Tree* in the Midſt of the *Garden of* Eden, called the *Tree of Life*; Becauſe it was a *Sacrament*, or Seal of eternal Life to Mankind, if they had perſiſted in their Integrity. Some contend, that Tree had an *immortalizing phyſical Vertue*; yet, it being Sacramental, deſtroys that, and plainly ſays it was not: Nor will it help them, to ſay, Why did God *baniſh our firſt Parents from it*, but becauſe it would have made them immortal? For the plain Reaſon of that was, becauſe they had forfeited the promiſed Life, and therefore had no Right to the *Seal* or Sacrament thereof. I ſhall yield, however, the Fruit of that Tree was both pleaſant and healthful: But, that we may have ſome clearer View of this notable Privilege, we ſhall ſee it in its Parts.

(1.) The Good promiſed, *The Tree of Life*: This is not a *Symbolical Tree*, but it is the *Truth* and Subſtance of all the *Types* and Prophecies made from the Beginning; and wherever we read of this Tree of Life in Scripture, it ſtill ſtretches its Intendment to the Root, and the Fruits of Grace, in order to Glory. It is ſpoke of Wiſdom, *Prov.* iii. 18. *She is a Tree of Life to them that lay hold on her, and happy is every One that retaineth her*: And, it is applied to the Reward of Righteouſneſs, *Prov.* xi. 30. *The Fruit of the Righteous is a Tree of Life.* This can be nothing leſs than Jeſus Chriſt, all that he is, and all that he has purchaſed. This, ſome think, was mainly deſigned by the Sacramental *Tree of Life* in the Garden of *Eden*: But, whatever be in that, we are ſure Chriſt is called a Tree, *John* xv. 1. *I am the true Vine.* He is alſo called Life, *John* xiv. 6. *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life*; where certainly eternal Life is pointed out, which *eternal Life is in Chriſt*, 1 John v. 11, 20. Yea, he is expreſly called *Eternal Life.* He is called a *Tree*, for theſe Reaſons, his Stability, his Strength, his Beauty, and he is always diſcloſing new Treaſures of Fruit.

(2.) The Situation of this Tree, *In the Midſt of the Paradiſe of God*: This alludes to the Places of the old Tree of Life in the Midſt of the Garden of *God*; But beſide it there was the Tree of Death, which hath no Room in this Paradiſe. *Paradiſe* was

the proper Name of the firſt Garden; but, ſince it has been applied to the Church Militant, *A Garden incloſed is my Beloved*, Song iv. 12. It is alſo applied to the Triumphant Church, *Luke* xxiii. 43. *This Night ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.* Now, Chriſt is in both: He is in his Church by his Divine Preſence, he is in Heaven glorioufly enthroned at the *Father's* Right-hand; and that here he is ſaid to be in the *Midſt*, it may note his moſt intimate Preſence with the Saints in Heaven and on Earth, according to his gracious Promiſe, *Mat.* xviii. 20. *Where Two or Three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the Midſt of them.*

(3.) The Way of Fruition, they *ſhall eat of it.* Many a Time Communion with God in Chriſt, and the Participation of ſpiritual Bleſſings, is repreſented to us by this natural Action, and that upon ſeveral Grounds, 1. The Satisfaction they give. 2. The Influence they have upon our Spirits, cheriſhing and ſtrengthning them. 3. Repeated Eating repreſents renewed Favours with the ſame Reliſh. 4. The Reality of the Bleſſedneſs; as Eating is a real Action, and lies not in the Apprehenſion, ſo is it with the Communion with the Tree of Life, and that both in Grace here, and Glory hereafter.

(4.) The Way how they have this Privilege, *I will give it*, ſays Chriſt, who is the Judge of our Fighting, and has the Crown in his Hand to be beſtowed on the Overcomer. It ſays further, it is a *gratis* Happineſs, they are not to buy it; it is purchaſed for them, and proceeds from his free Grace.

I cannot underſtand how this Epiſtle ſhould point out the *primitive* Church, more than the Church in any other Period of the World: But even theſe who are for the Prophetick Senſe, do not agree amongſt themſelves; ſome meaſure from the Aſcenſion of Chriſt to the End of the firſt Century; ſome carry it further down; and others tell us it was over thirty Years before *John* had this Viſion: But then, theſe muſt own this Epiſtle to be a Hiſtory, and not a Prophecy.

EPISTLE II.

8 And unto the Angel of the Church in Smyrna, write, Theſe Things ſaith the Firſt and Laſt, which was dead, and is alive.

IN the firſt Part of this Inſcription, we have nothing to obſerve but the Deſignation of this Church from its Place, *Smyrna*, a City alſo in the Leſſer *Aſia*, ſituate Northward from *Epheſus*. It was a conſiderable City, and valued itſelf much for the Birth of *Homer* the famous *Greek* Poet, who is ſaid to have flouriſhed about 900 Years before Chriſt. Some ſay, It was built by one *Smyrna* Queen of the *Amazons*. Others, That *Theſius* a great King raiſed it from a Village, to the Honour of a City, and named it after his Queen. Others ſay, It had its Name from *Myrrhe*; becauſe great Plenty of the beſt Sort is found there. It is this Day famous for its Commerce with moſt Nations in *Europe*.

In the ſecond Part of the Inſcription, which is above explained, *Chap.* i. 17, 18. we have only to notice, how well choſen this *Character* is, which our Lord takes to himſelf, and how ſuitable it is to the Caſe of this poor, perſecuted, honeſt Church. He encourages them under their Sufferings, from his own Example; for he had ſuffered, and that unto Death. He alſo, from the ſame Example, inſpires them with Hope: For, as he, after Death, did live; ſo ſhould they, after their Sufferings were over, meet with a merciful Deliverance, and that their Life would flow from him, *John* xiv. 19. *Becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo.* By this he alſo directs to the Exerciſe of a lively Faith, the only Mean whereby Life could be derived from him to them.

This is the ſhorteſt of the Epiſtles; for the Subſtance of it is abſolved in the next Two Verſes, where we will find ſeveral Things ſaid to the Advantage of this poor Church. As, in the Epiſtle to *Epheſus*, he deſcribes its paſt and preſent State; ſo, in this Epiſtle, he takes Notice of the *preſent* and *after* State of the Church of *Smyrna*: So that a Part of it is certainly *Prophetical*, and another Part is as certainly *Hiſtorical*, which will make but little for the Deſign of the *Periodiſts*.

9 I know thy Works, and Tribulation, and Poverty, (but thou art rich) and *I know* the Blaſphemy of them, which ſay they are Jews, and are not; but are the Synagogue of Satan.

10 Fear

10 Fear none of those Things which thou shalt suffer: Behold, the Devil will cast some of you into Prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have Tribulation ten Days: Be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.

Here we have, 1. The present, *v.* 9. 2. The future State of this Church, *v.* 10.

I. Their *present State*, which is very melancholly, yet mentioned with a great deal of Compassion, and some of them have special Consolations added.

1. *Tribulation*, Θλιψις, or being thrown down, and cast to the Ground; as the proper Signification of the Word imports. This points at their outward Pressures by *Persecution*, as it reached their Bodies, Relations or Reputations; as Banishment, Imprisonment, Scourging, &c. For all these, and many worse, and harder Things, did *Christians* suffer for the Sake of Christ.

2. Their external and worldly Condition, expressed by *Poverty*. To this we have a notable Cordial opposed: Their Penury was very great, no Doubt, occasioned by the Persecution; Plundering, Forfeiting, or Fining, being its usual Concomitants. This Church was not poor in the Sense the *Laodicean* Church was *poor*, Chap. iii. 17. but they were poor in the same Sense *James* takes it, *James* ii. 5. *God hath chosen the Poor of this World, rich in Faith.* And further, this seems to point at the Resignation of their Minds; so that they were like these, who *took joyfully the Spoiling of their Goods.* It has been observed, that *Covetousness* has been the Spring of most of these *Persecutions* the Church has met with.

But we would notice the interjected Comfort, *But thou art rich*: They were *rich* in one Sense, but *poor* in another; this may appear a Paradox, but it is a great Truth, as the Apostle's Experience clears, 2 *Cor.* vi. 10. while he was *as having nothing, yet possessing all Things.* Their Riches consist, 1. In their *Saving Knowledge.* The *Stoicks* could say, Only wise Men were rich; much more we say, The spiritually Wise are rich; and so we would speak after *Solomon, Wisdom is the principal Thing, therefore get Wisdom, and with all thy getting, get Understanding.* 2. In *Faith*, because that grips Christ; and therefore Believers are said to be *rich in Faith.* 3. In *Holiness*, and the Exercise of *Charity*; and so they are *rich in good Works*, 1 Tim. vi. 18. What Comfort could be greater than a Message from Christ, declaring this Opinion of them, that they had the true and *durable Riches*?

3. Their Reproach; *The Blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not; but are the Synagogue of Satan.* Where we have, 1. The Evil they met with, Reproach, called here *Blasphemy*, which sometimes notes only Evil-speaking, or loading People with hard Names, &c. Properly it points out Reproach against God himself, or his Ways. I make no Doubt but both are to be understood here; for they not only bestowed opprobrious Names upon the Christians, in a thousand scurrilous Expressions, but also defamed our blessed Lord himself, by denying his *Deity*, and rejecting his *Gospel*: Ancient Histories give Abundance of Instances, as to both these. 2. The Authors of these Reproaches, they are *pretended Jews*, call themselves what they were not. Some take this to be a figurative Expression, and that the Sense of it is *Hereticks*, or *False Christians*: But I see no Need of running to a Figure, when the Matter is so plain; for certainly the *Jews* were implacable Enemies to the *Christians*, and we are credibly informed, they had a *Synagogue* at *Smyrna*, it being a *Mart City*; where, tho' they wanted Authority to persecute formally, yet failed not to vomit out their Mischief, in the most calumnious Expressions against them. It is here said, They were but *nominally Jews*, not *real*; the Meaning whereof may be, Tho' they were *Jews* by Birth, yet had they renounced both the true Faith and Practice of the *Jews*; they were but *Jews outwardly*, and had *outward Circumcision*, but were estranged from the Circumcision of the Heart. This may receive Light from our Lord's Words, *John* viii. 39. *If ye were* Abraham's *Seed, ye would do the Works of* Abraham. Yet he had owned, two Verses before, *v.* 37. *I know that ye are* Abraham's *Seed.* The plain Meaning of it then is, Tho' they were naturally descended from *Abraham*, yet they discovered themselves to have nothing to do with the Promise. 3. Christ's Character of these *Jews*, which is a plain Sentence of Exculpation in Favours of this Church, *But are the Synagogue of Satan. Synagogue* was the Name given to the several religious Assemblies of the *Jews* throughout all their Borders, and, after they were scattered, in the several Nations they were driven to: Sometimes we find in the New Testament, it signifies the Place where they met; but here, certainly it is meant of the Persons. Some choose to render it an *Assembly of Devils*; both because *Syna-*

gogue ſignifies a Congregation, and *Satan* is indeclinable: This will agree well enough with our Lord's Words, *John* viii. 44. *Ye are of your Father the Devil, for he was a Liar and a Murderer from the Beginning*, whoſe Example they had followed. It is further to be noticed, that *Satan* ſignifies an Adverſary, and ſo they were Enemies to God and his People: And here, if we add the Verb our Tranſlators have very reaſonably ſupplied, *I know*, it imports his Care, Help, and Diſpoſing of all aright.

II. We have an Account of the *future* State of this Church, *v.* 10. where we may notice, 1. An encouraging Warning of further Evils to come. 2. A Condeſcenſion upon ſome main Afflictions ſome of them were to lay their Accounts with. 3. A Direction how to carry, with a merciful Promiſe.

1. A Warning of further Evils, with an Encouragement, *Fear none of thoſe Things which thou ſhalt ſuffer.* It is commonly ſaid, 'tis a great Relief in Trouble to know they are at the laſt Part of their Affliction: However, this Church wants that Satisfaction. But there is another Bleſſedneſs we have from the Word, *Pſal.* xciv. 12. *Bleſſed is the Man whom thou chaſtneſt, O Lord, and teacheſt out of thy Law.* Here ſhe has a twofold Inſtruction, Firſt, that more Sufferings abide her; And then, how ſhe is to carry. It is uſually ſaid, and it is true, *Premonitus, Premunitus*; here ſhe is fortified againſt after Bickerings. When *Agag* knew, at leaſt ſuſpected his Doom, he told, *The Bitterneſs of Death was over.* Yet all we have here, is no more than what every Chriſtian ſhould lay his Account with; for it is one of the fundamental Terms upon which we are to indent with Chriſt, *If any Man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his Croſs*, Luke ix. 23. Chriſt aſſures her, ſhe has more Troubles than one or two to undergo; but he does not tell their Number, nor their Extent, at leaſt here. In the mean Time, he gives an encouraging Advice, *Fear not*: Which, in my humble Opinion, has a Promiſe wrapt up in the ſame, of his Preſence; ſhe was not to be alone in the Dark, which is frightful, he was to be with her. It muſt be a happy Place where the Saints are bleſſed with Chriſt's Preſence, tho' it were a Furnace. Here he ſhews the Danger of a ſtupifying Fear, for it puts People off all juſt and honeſt Meaſures; yea, many a Time, Fear does more Miſchief than the Calamity; and therefore it is a neceſſary Duty incumbent on all Chriſtians, to ſummon up all the Courage they have.

2. Chriſt is pleaſed, next, to make ſome gracious Condeſcenſions upon their Troubles, and this the more to prepare them for the Shock; they are Two.

(1.) He condeſcends upon a particular Calamity, and ſhews the Deſign thereof. As for the Calamity, it is this, *The Devil will caſt ſome of you into Priſon.* Where we have to notice, 1. The Perſons, *Some of you*: There is Comfort here, they were not all to be ſhut up, yet many of them were to be ſerved with this Meaſure; but who, is not ſaid. Some think, this *Some* is to be underſtood of *Miniſters*; there is no Doubt *Satan* wrecks his Spight more againſt them than others, becauſe they are the Enſign-bearers of the Church; but, it not being ſpecified here by the *Holy Ghoſt*, it will be Raſhneſs in any other to attempt it. And, ſeeing the Epiſtle is directed to the whole Church, *v.* 11. ſome *private Chriſtians* might have the Honour, as well as *Miniſters*. 2. The *Affliction* they were to meet with, *To be caſt into Priſon.* I do not think we are to underſtand this, as if the Trial was to proceed no further than the Loſs of Liberty for a Time; but it is to tell them they were to be ſo far in their Enemies Power, as be impriſoned by them; and then they might eaſily judge of the reſt, if left to themſelves, and ſo it may be one Piece of Sufferings put for the Whole: Yet I cannot think it adviſable to tell what other Steps of Cruelty the Wicked might be left to exerciſe upon them further than this, tho' Chriſtians are called to prepare for the worſt; for, being in *Priſon*, they were in Hazard of *Torments*, yea, of Death itſelf. 3. The Author of this Affliction, the *Devil*: Tho' this be a Name ſometimes wicked Perſons get in Scripture, yet, I think, here it is to be underſtood of the *Infernal Fiend*; tho' the *Heathen* and the *Jews* might be the Inſtruments, yet *Satan* is the grand Mover: This is but the Continuation of the *old War* betwixt the *Serpent* and the *Woman*; which alſo adviſeth us who actuates and moves Perſecutors, they are driven of the *Devil.* Yet, as we heard before, he is chain'd, *Chriſt has the Keys of Hell and Death*; which is Matter of Comfort to wreſtling Churches or Perſons.

Next, we have the Deſign of caſting them into Priſon, *That ye may be tried*: With Submiſſion, I rather think, it ſhould be rendred *Tempted*: For, to be ſure, Chriſt is not here ſpeaking of God's Deſign, but the Devil's, who never deſigned, by his Miſchief, to diſcover the Saints Graces, but to move their Corruptions; and ſo far I beg Leave to recede from the Mind of many Expoſitors: My Grounds are, The Word commonly ſignifies to *tempt* to Sin, and this very Word is denied of God, *James* i. 13. *For God tempteth no Man.* Again, here the whole Speech is of the *Devil*, and not of God:

God: And ſo the Meaning is, Chriſt mercifully advertiſeth them of the Sting of *Satan*'s Tentations, to force them to renounce him, and abandon the Profeſſion of his Name. It was for this End he *ſought to winnow* Peter; ſo that here is a Caveat to this Church, that they may not yield to the Will of the Tempter, and ſin.

(2.) There is another Condeſcenſion of the Duration of this Church's Perſecution, *And ye ſhall have Tribulation ten Days.* Here Expoſitors divide in many Factions about the Meaning of *Ten.* Some contend it is a Definite for an Indefinite Time; and here alſo they ſplite, while ſome contend, that Ten ſignifies many Days, as ſaid *Jacob,* Gen. xxxi. 41. *Thou haſt changed my Wages ten Times,* i. e. many Times. But others will have it to ſignify a ſhort Time; as *Rebekah*'s Brother ſaid, *Let the Damſel abide with us a few Days, at leaſt Ten.* But they ſhould have noticed, it is certainly taken in a definite Senſe in that Text; and the ſame may be ſaid for the other Texts, *Numb.* xi. 19. *Gen.* xviii. 29. they quote to this Purpoſe. And ſo I think we may fairly reject this indefinite ſhort Time: And indeed the indefinite long Time will be found oppreſſed with no fewer Difficulties; for it is owned on all Hands, this is advanced here for the Conſolation of this Church, ſo much in Diſtreſs. Now, where is the Comfort to tell them they were to have Tribulation a long Time, and yet not tell them how long? Yea, in their Senſe, it muſt be very long, which would have been enough to make them deſpond altogether. I am therefore of the Mind, it is to be taken definitely, but then the *Difficulties* are but beginning; for Expoſitors, that take it definitely, are not agreed about the Signification of the Word *Day*: To underſtand them of *Natural Days,* conſiſting of Twenty four Hours, makes it a very ſhort Time; and it cannot be inſtructed, that ever there was ſuch a ſhort Perſecution. Others extend it to as many Years, as there are Hours in ten Days, *i. e.* 240; but then it will be as hard to find an intenſe Perſecution laſt ſo long Time. Others, by *ten Days,* underſtand the *ten Perſecutions*; but then, ſome of theſe, as is confeſſed, were over before this Time, whereas this Text plainly ſpeaks them all to come. The Meaning that I have moſt Clearneſs to go in with, is, That by theſe *ten Days,* we underſtand *ten Years*: That many a Time in the Scripture a Day is put for an Year, is undeniable; And we may afterwards have Occaſion at more Length to enquire into the ſame. If it be objected, That to tell this Church of *ten Days Tribulation,* and yet that be ſpun out to *ten Years,* might be as ready to drive them to Deſpair, as to mean by it a long Time, ſeeing ten Years is a long Time: I anſwer, The Churches at that Time were no Strangers to the Prophetick Stile, and might know the true Meanning thereof, much better than we at this Diſtance, eſpecially being ſo near a living Commentary, the Apoſtle *John*; and the Truth, by this Means, be alſo concealed from their Enemies, in whoſe Hand a Copy of this *Prophecy* might fall. But ſtill it may be enquired, When this ten Years Perſecution fell out? The Want of complete Hiſtories of theſe Times, may plead Excuſe, that we cannot anſwer that preciſely; yet ſomething might be offered to clear this. And, for this End, many refer this to the Perſecution in *Trajan*'s Time, which began in the Year 99, and laſted till 109, which happened a little after this Prophecy; for there were but about two or three Years betwixt the Death of *Domitian,* and the Acceſſion of *Trajan,* tho' *Nerva* had a ſhort Reign betwixt them: This indeed bids fairer for the Truth, than any Thing I have yet ſeen.

There remains one Difficulty more, How this Church's Sufferings come to be mentioned ſo particularly, and no Account made of the Tribulations of her Siſter-Churches that lay ſo near her? for *Trajan*'s bloody Orders were equally directed againſt all Churches. I own there is Difficulty in this, yet ſomething may be offered by Way of Conjecture; and if there be little to ſupport, there will be as little to overthrow it. 1. It might depend upon the violent Temper of the *Roman Governor* at this City: For, to be ſure, *Smyrna* being a Place of great Traffick, and much frequented, there would be proper Officers to inſpect the Place, as well as for the Sake of the Tribute would be levied continually in ſuch a Town; and it is known, Delegates, as they are ſometimes too remiſs, ſo at other Times they over-do. 2. There being a great many *Jews* in this Place, might uſe Artifices to make the poor *Chriſtians* hateful to the *Roman Officers,* and haſten their Calamity, and heighten it above what other Churches might meet with. 3. It is noted, this Church was *poor,* and therefore unable to ſatisfy the covetous Gorge of the Rulers, who made it their Buſineſs to enrich themſelves with the Spoils of their ſeveral Governments; and the other Churches being richer, might be able to purchaſe their Peace, which this Church could not. 4. I may add, That this Church was a very pure One, and lived cloſer up to the Rules of the Goſpel than others of them did, which would not ſuffer them to make ſome wide Steps of Defection that ſome of her Siſter-Churches were guilty of; and this would make her the more obnoxious: For the *Devil* never rages more, than againſt the pureſt; for theſe are at the furtheſt Remove from him.

3. There is a Direction how to carry, with a merciful Promiſe, *Be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.* As for the *Direction*, it is not only adviſing them to Sincerity (which ſome take to be all the Meaning) but to be ſtedfaſt, conſtant, and true to their *Maſter's* Orders; upon no Account muſt they reſile. And this will help us out with the Meaning of the next Clauſe, *unto Death*; which is not to be ſo underſtood ſimply, that they ſhould perſevere, tho' that be in it too; but, in a ſpecial Manner, it reſpects the Riſque they were to run: And ſo the Meaning is, Coſt what it will, you muſt adhere. To this Purpoſe the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* xii. 4. *Ye have not yet reſiſted unto Blood, ſtriving againſt Sin.* This was the magnanimous Reſolution of the Apoſtle, *Acts* xxi. 13. *I am ready, not to be bound only, but to die at* Jeruſalem, *for the Name of the Lord Jeſus.* Laſtly, we have the Promiſe, *I will give thee a Crown of Life*, or *a living Crown.* This Promiſe is an Earneſt of the Reſurrection, that they ſhall be ſure of a glorious One: And alſo, it points at the State of Glory to which Believers are admitted immediately after Death, and ſo it makes up the whole Comprehenſion of that Goſpel-promiſe, *Mat.* x. 39. *He that loſeth his Life for my Sake, ſhall find it.* This is called a *Crown of Righteouſneſs*, a *Crown of Life*, a *Crown of Glory*; this Deſignation declares its *Beauty*, its *Worth*, and *Honour* which the Perſon receives thereby. And then, after all, it is free, and is a Mark of Chriſt's ſpecial Favour. Follows the Concluſion,

11 He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches. He that overcometh, ſhall not be hurt of the ſecond Death.

We have nothing to explain of this Verſe but the Promiſe, *Shall not be hurt of the ſecond Death.* Which is moſt ſuitable to the Caſe of this poor wreſtling Church, having been exerciſed with Tribulation already, and ſure to meet with more, but know not to what Height; for ſhe knew not but theſe might reach even unto *Death*, that is, the *firſt Death*, by which we are to mean a natural Death, or the Separation of the Soul from the Body: But then ſhe has Aſſurance againſt the *ſecond Death.* It appears an odd Turn of Thought in ſome, who would underſtand this as a Security againſt Defection, and this alſo promiſed to the *Overcomer*; where One might in all Reaſon be brought to think, that to overcome, is to be ſtedfaſt, and conſtant; and then to promiſe him he ſhould not fall away, is juſt as much as to ſay, Be thou faithful unto Death, and then I promiſe thou ſhalt not make Defection: How unworthy is this of the Speaker in our Text? But that which caſts up to be the plain Senſe of this Promiſe, is to oppoſe this *ſecond Death* to the *Crown of Life*; and it will then caſt up a notable Promiſe of Freedom from Hell and eternal Wrath, *i. e.* Tho' they ſhould die for the Faith a natural and temporal Death, yet they were out of the Reach of Hell or an *eternal Death.* To this ſame Purpoſe, we have an Expreſſion in this Prophecy, *Rev.* xx. 6. *Bleſſed is he that hath Part in the firſt Reſurrection, for the ſecond Death ſhall not have Power over him.* This is explained afterwards, *Rev.* xxi. 8. *But the Fearful and Unbelieving*, &c. *ſhall have their Part in the Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimſtone, which is the ſecond Death.* This, to be ſure, is the ſtrongeſt Motive to Patience and Perſeverance.

Moreover, to me, in this Promiſe, there appears ſomething further couched up, *viz.* a moſt dreadful and terrible Threatning againſt them who do not overcome, that they ſhould infallibly fall into the Jaws of that *ſecond Death*: For, if it is not to have Power ſo much as to touch the *Overcomer*, then it ſeems to follow, that the *Yielder*, or he that is overcome, will be given up to the Power and Rage of it, *i. e.* they will be ſwallowed up thereof. Which fully verifies the other Part of Chriſt's Aphoriſm, *Mat.* x. 39. *He that findeth his Life, ſhall loſe it*, q. d. Whoever, conſulting his own Safety, will ſo far humour the prevailing Corruption of the World, as for his temporal Safety, &c. renounce Chriſt; that Man ſhall loſe, not only a temporal Life, but alſo ſhall be eternally damned.

Theſe learned Men, who contend theſe Epiſtles ſhould be underſtood Prophetically, make this to deſcribe the ſecond Period of the Church, and to begin where the firſt ended, *i. e.* variouſly, according to their different Schemes; and they diſcord as much about the End of this, while ſome conclude it in the Year 281, others carry it down to *Conſtantine's* Time, and make it the Hiſtorical Prophecy of all the Heathen Perſecutions; and a third Sort bring it down to the Reign of *Phocas*, in the Year 600, when, they ſay, *Antichriſt* roſe.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE III.

12 And to the Angel of the Church in Pergamos, write, These Things saith he, which hath the sharp Sword with the two Edges.

IN this Inscription we have the Residence of this Church, *Pergamos*, a City in the Country of *Troas*, and Capital of the Province: It lay Northward from *Smyrna*: Some say, It had its Name from its Situation, upon a high Hill near to the Sea, and was a Sort of Promontary. It was sometimes famous for the Seat of the *Attalic* Kings. This City valued itself very much upon the Birth of *Galen*, that famous Physician, who was born in the Reign of *Trajan*; his Fame was blaz'd abroad. After his Death, they deified him under the Name of *Esculapius*, and built a Temple to his Honour, where they did sacrifice in a very prophane Manner: Hence, some think, it had the Designation of *Satan's Seat*. This City was also famous for the Invention of Paper, which, from the Place, was called *Pergamena*; which, they say, was made of Skins, as our Parchment.

This Epistle was sent from Christ Jesus, who, in it, calls himself, *He that hath the sharp Sword with the two Edges*, which we explained *Chap.* i. 6. I only notice here, how applicable this *Character* of *Christ* is to the State of this *Church*, as represented in the Epistle, she being in the greatest Hazard of being seduced and overpowered. *Joshua* had a Vision that much resembled this, when he was by *Jericho*, *He saw a Man standing over against him with a drawn Sword in his Hand*, Josh. v. 13. Some again say, There is something in this a-kin to that Appearance was made to *Balaam*, Numb. xxii. 3. *An Angel with a drawn Sword.* So that this *Sword* was against him; and they believe the same is intended here, the rather that Mention is made of *Balaam* in this Epistle. I see not why both these Thoughts may not take Place here; for he does threaten, if she did not repent, he would come and fight with the Sword of his Mouth, which, to be sure, is more than sharp Rebukes: And so, if she would repent, then he would imploy the Sword of his Indignation to avenge her of her Enemies. And so the Design of it is, to excite them to Duty, and encourage them under Difficulties.

Follows the Body of the Epistle, in the next four Verses.

13 I know thy Works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's Seat is: And thou holdest fast my Name, and hast not denied my Faith, even in those Days wherein Antipas was my faithful Martyr, who was slain among you where Satan dwelleth.

14 But I have a few Things against thee, because thou hast them there, that hold the Doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a Stumbling-block before the Children of Israel, to eat Things sacrificed to Idols, and to commit Fornication.

15 So hast thou also them that hold the Doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which Thing I hate.

16 Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the Sword of my Mouth.

In this we have, 1. A Commendation, *v.* 13. 2. A Challenge, *v.* 14, 15. 3. An Exhortation, with a Certification, *v.* 16.

There is, in this, the general Preface to all the Epistles, *I know thy Works*; which has an Addition here, and *where thou dwellest, even where Satan's Seat* [Throne] *is*. So that Christ not only observes the State of his Churches, as to their Growth or Decay, but he notices what Neighbours they sit beside; which may in a particular Manner raise the Commendation, and therefore will fall more naturally under Consideration afterwards.

I. There is the *Commendation* of this Church, *v.* 13. And there are two notable Elogies made on her, each of them greatned by a special Circumstance of great Moment. The

1ſt Thing Chriſt praiſes her for, *Thou holdeſt my Name*; this was their preſent Work when the *Epiſtle* was written, by which we are to mean the hearty Acknowledgment, and upright outward Profeſſion of Chriſt: It was their Practice, what was the Reſolution of the Lord's People of old, *Mic.* iv. 5. *We will walk in the Name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.* If it ſhould be ſaid, This was but common to them with the other Churches: I anſwer, It may be ſo; yet there is this *peculiar* to this Church, that is not to be found in the reſt, that ſhe did it *even where Satan's Throne is.* It is ſmall Praiſe to be honeſt, where there is no Occaſion to ſteal; or to be ſtout, where is no Danger: But to be ſtedfaſt in a wavering Generation, and to be *bold* amidſt *Danger*, is the Work of a Champion; and this was the Caſe of the Church of *Pergamos*, for ſhe did it there where *Satan* had his *Throne.* I ſaid, Some by this underſtand the idolatrous Worſhip was ſet up by Authority, which indeed from the Context ſeems to bid as fair for the true Meaning, as any Thing I ſee advanced by others. It is alſo ſure from Scripture, that what is offered to Idols, is ſaid to be offered to Devils, *Lev.* xvii. 7. *They ſhall no more offer their Sacrifices unto Devils, after whom they have gone a-whoring.* And again, it is ſaid, *Deut.* xxxii. 16, 17. *They provoked him to Jealouſy with their ſtrange gods; they ſacrified unto Devils, not unto God: To gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up.* Others render *Satan*, Enemy; and, by the Enemies *Throne*, they underſtand the *Roman* Deputy, whom ſome affirm (upon what Ground I know not) to have had the Title of *King*, as *Herod* had in *Judea*; and hence is Mention made of his *Throne.* They further ſay, He in *John's* Time (for I hear not of his Name) was a great Idolater, and a bitter Enemy to the Chriſtians: This would do well, if it had Authorty to ſupport it; but whether or not, it is not far different from the others. But, tho' neither the one nor the other ſhould be the Truth, there is as much in the Context as will juſtify this Character our Lord gives the Infidel Inhabitants of *Pergamos*, that *Satan* did really reign amongſt them: For, what greater Evidence can there be of this, than theſe three, Perſecution, Uncleanneſs, and Idolatry? He wanted not alſo great Influence upon the carnal Profeſſors of Chriſt, who could go to their Idol-feaſts, to the Reproach of the holy Faith, and Grief of ſerious Chriſtians. Now, for them to hold faſt the Name of Chriſt, amongſt all theſe, was certainly highly commendable; for *eſſe bonos inter malos eſt culmen pietatis*; to dare be good among ringing Wickedneſs, is the Pinacle of Piety.

2. He commends this Church for her former Behaviour, as well as her preſent; *And haſt not denied my Faith.* Which has certainly a Retroſpect from the very Conſtruction. It was not a Fit of New-fangleneſs; they had been ineured to this Carriage. Our Lord here calls the Doctrine of Salvation *my Faith*, not only becauſe he revealed it, but alſo becauſe it led the Way to him: And it may be further called *Chriſt's Faith*, in Oppoſition to the Doctrines of *Balaam* and the *Nicolaitans* after-mentioned. And while he praiſes them, *they had not denied the ſame*, there is a *Meioſis*; and the Meaning is, they maintained and defended, yea they profeſſed and practiſed it: Theſe were bold Champions, and the more from the Time when they behaved ſo, *In thoſe Days wherein* Antipas *was my faithful Martyr, who was ſlain among you where Satan dwelleth.* It would appear to any Eye, that this points at the *Time paſt*; yet our *Periodiſts* have fallen upon the Knack, to make this to reſpect the *Future*: I ſhall own, many a Time Predictions are given in the *Preterit*, to denote the Certainty of them; but, I imagine, it will be hard to give an Inſtance from Scripture of two Parts of a *Prophecy* in the ſame *Verſe*, whereof the one is advanced in the *preſent Tenſe*, and the other in the *Preterit*, which is the Caſe here. They refuſe *Antipas* to be the proper Name of a *Man*, but that it is a *Collective*, and comprehends a Multitude of Perſons, deſcribed by their Nature in this Word *Antipas*, i. e. *Oppoſers of the Pope* and his Uſurpation; to which Period, they ſay, this Epiſtle is to be referred: But a Body might deſire ſome more Evidence than their Word for it. Theſe who are for the Hiſtorical Senſe alledge, There was really a Man in *Pergamos* of this Name, and that he was a Miniſter. It is true, we have no Manner of Reaſon to doubt there was an eminent Chriſtian in that City of this Name, before this Letter was written, no more than we can doubt ſuch Perſons lived in *Rome*, *Corinth*, &c. whom the Apoſtle mentions in his ſeveral Epiſtles, tho' we read of ſome of them no where elſe: But how we ſhall determine whether he was Miniſter of the Goſpel, or *private* Chriſtian, I ſee not; unleſs we could ſay, that none has the Character of Chriſt's *Martyrs* but Miniſters, which I know none will avouch. But, be who he will, he has the Honour to have an Epithet of Diſtinction from our Lord the beſt Judge, and that by Way of Eulogy, *My faithful Martyr.* They were commonly called *Confeſſors*, who ſuffered Bonds, Baniſhment, or any other arbitrary Puniſhments; but, it is alledged, none was honoured with the Deſignation of *Martyr*, but ſuch as ſealed the Truth with their Blood; this was certainly true of this holy

holy Man: But what the Nature of his Death was, is uncertain, unleſs we will give Ear to Legands; or whether he was a notable Exorciſt, or not, is not ſaid; we are ſure he was a good Man. It is pleaſantly obſerved, this is the only Scripture-ſaint the Papiſts have not done the Honour of Canonization to; and the Reaſon given is, Becauſe his Name ſounds him to have been againſt the Papal Dignity: It may be, this is as groundleſs, as ſome other Things ſaid of him.

II. We have the *Challenge*, *v.* 14, 15. in two Branches; the *1ſt*, *v.* 14. the *2d*, *v.* 15. for to me they appear different.

1ſt Challenge, we have, *v.* 14. after he had given it a geneal Turn, *But I have a few Things againſt thee.* We had this before, *v.* 4. There is an Addition here, of *a few Things*. I cannot yield that this Church was leſs culpable in the Sight of Chriſt than the Church of *Epheſus*, as ſome alledge; unleſs we will ſay, that the Falling from the firſt Love is a greater Sin, than the Tolerating of theſe Evils we read of here: In this Caſe I make no Struggle; but ſtill, as to theſe Errors, 'tis evident the Church of *Epheſus* is more juſtifiable than this Church. This Addition of *a few Things* does alſo import, that what is mentioned *v.* 15. is not the ſame with *v.* 14. for, were they the ſame, they would be but one Thing. The *1ſt* Particular challenged, is, they *had there them that hold the Doctrine of* Balaam; they are not called *Balaamites*, as the others are called *Nicolaitans*, becauſe they had here copied after the Sin of *Balaam*, tho' they would not name themſelves after him; nor is it probable that they were named ſo by any, till Chriſt told them of it in this Place. Nor is it improbable our Lord might call theſe Doctrines of *Balaam*, becauſe of the Likeneſs and Reſemblance that the Idolatry of *Pergamos* with *Eſculapius*, had to the Idolatry that *Balaam* decoyed the *Iſraelites* to; ſo that the Underſtanding of the one will be an Explication of the other. *Moſes* gives a Hint of this, when he tells the *Iſraelites*, Numb. xxxi. 16. *The Women of the* Moabites *cauſed the Children of* Iſrael, *through the Counſel of* Balaam, *to commit Treſpaſs againſt the Lord, in the Matter of* Peor: Which was a moſt obſcence Idol, and was ſerved after the moſt prophane Manner, by Acts of Uncleanneſs; for which the Anger of God was kindled, *and he ſlew* 24000 *of them*, Numb. xxv. 9. all which no Doubt were guilty. There ſeems then be no Myſtery here, but a Compariſon of the Sins of the *Pergamenians*, with the Sins of the *Moabites*, in two Things, Idolatry and Uncleanneſs; which will be well underſtood by reading the xxiv. and xxxi. Chapters of *Numbers*. This Church is not however accuſed of theſe Pieces of Wickedneſs; it is only ſaid, *Thou haſt them there*; which may appear a little to cenſure this Church, becauſe they were ſo unhappy, as to have ſuch Neighbours about them: But this is not all, there is more couched up here. Nor can I better explain this, than by oppoſing their Behaviour towards theſe guilty, with the *Epheſians* Carriage, who hated theſe Things, and gave Teſtimony againſt them, both *doctrinally*, and in the Exerciſe of *Diſcipline*. Now, it would appear, he Church of *Pergamos* was not ſo zealous, but indulged ſome of theſe Wretches external Communion with them, and did not exclude them by a juſt Sentence; juſt as it is ſaid of the Church of *Thyatira*, *v.* 20. that *ſhe ſuffered Jezabel*. It is then the indiſputable Duty of all Chriſtian Societies to purge themſelves from all groſs and open Offenders: It is not enough they did not go Snips with them in their wicked Acts, but they ſhould alſo have teſtified againſt them; this was their Sin: And yet, from all this, I ſee not how it would have been lawful for any particular Members to have *ſeparate* themſelves from the Communion of this Church; elſe, in my humble Opinion, Chriſt would not have failed to adviſed it; but yet we have not one Word to that Purpoſe.

2d Challenge is, *v.* 15. they tolerate, at leaſt connived at the *Nicolaitans*; which was croſs the Practice of the *Epheſian* Church. We have already ſaid all we can of this Error, on *v.* 6. I only here notice, this Error, tho' it is advanced as the other, yet ſeems to differ conſiderably from it; yet I ſee not how we can ſhew wherein: Nor will it prove them to be the ſame, becauſe only one of them is diſcovered, and the other only mentioned; For, 1. Our Lord might expreſs the *Eſculapian* Idolatry by the Matter of *Peor*, not only becauſe of their Agreement, but alſo becauſe of that heavy Wrath of God that came upon the *Iſraelites* and *Moabites*, that ſo he might deter this Church from having any Dealing with them. 2. The Hereſy of the *Nicolaitans* was known by the Name, and ſo needed not be further explained, than by this Note of Diverſification, *alſo*; which, to me, plainly ſays, They were not the ſame.

III. There is the Exhortation, with a Certification, *v.* 16. whereof all the Parts have already been under Conſideration. There is a little Turn of the Perſon, in the two different Clauſes of the Threatning: Chriſt ſpeaks to them in the firſt, *I will come unto thee quickly*, which we take to be the ſame in Senſe with what we had *v.* 5. And in

the ſecond Clauſe, it is turned to the third Perſon, *I will fight againſt them*, &c. Some have a very clever Way, by telling us it ſhould certainly read *thee* in both Clauſes: And this I aver to be a Piece of unaccountable Inſolence; for it was meet this *Turn* ſhould be, becauſe we have two Sorts of Perſons ſpoke to, 1. The Members of the Church, and, for ought I know, in a particular Manner the Repreſentatives, againſt whom he threatens, *I will come unto thee quickly*: The Meaning whereof we have ſeen. 2. The prophane Hereticks, whom the Church was not careful enough to treat as they deſerved; againſt whom he threatens, I will fight againſt *them* with the Sword of my Mouth: The Senſe whereof we had alſo above, *v.* 12. That which I take to be the Import of this, is, Chriſt threatens, if they would not do their Duty, he would come and take the Work out of their Hand, and puniſh firſt their Sloth, and then the Wickedneſs of theſe they had ſpared: And ſo all the Parts of this Epiſtle hang together.

The Concluſion follows.

17 He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches. To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the hidden Manna, and I will give him a white Stone, and in the Stone a new Name written, which no Man knoweth, ſaving he that receiveth it.

Where we have only the two Promiſes to conſider, the reſt being noticed before. 1*ſt* Promiſe made to the Overcomer is, *I will give to eat of the hidden Manna.* Whatever Feaſts were prepared of old for Gainers at Games, or Conquerors in Battle, I am not ready to think any of them is pointed at here; but the Lord ſeems to allude to the *Idol-Feaſts*, which the *Nicolaitans* and the other Hereticks were fond enough of: And here, in Oppoſition to them, there is a Meal of another Nature provided for the *Chriſtian Warrior*, even *the hidden Manna.* This Food is called *Manna*, from what the Children of *Iſrael* were fed with in the Wilderneſs, which was deſigned as a Type of Chriſt: As our Lord anſwers the *Jews*, who boaſted, *Their Fathers did eat Manna in the Deſert; As it is written, He gave them Bread from Heaven to eat*, John vi. 31. This our Lord explains afterwards to them, and tells them, *v.* 32. *My Father giveth you true Bread from Heaven*: Which he applies to himſelf, *v.* 35. *I am the Bread of Life.* There are ſeveral Things, in this *Manna*, deſigned to point out Chriſt; as, 1. The Original thereof, *from Heaven.* 2. The Way of Preparation, it was to be *bruiſed* before they ate it. 3. The Taſte of it, *ſweet* and *pleaſant.* 4. The Time when they ate it, in the *Wilderneſs.* But again, this has a particular Quality, it is called *hidden*: Some think, this alludes to the Nature of the *old Manna*, becauſe *they wiſt not what it was*: But it is a Property of the *new Manna*, that all who eat it *know it.* It ſeems rather therefore to point at *the golden Pot with Manna, which was laid up within the Holieſt of all, before the Teſtimony*, Exod. xvi. 34. And this plainly repreſents Chriſt in *Heaven*, yet communicated to Believers on *Earth*; and is indeed hidden from the Eye of Senſe and unſanctified Reaſon, and only ſeen by the Eye of Faith: Of this they are promiſed really to partake, under the Notion of *Eating*, which I explained before, *v.* 7. Yet the Pot of *Manna* was a Monument, and not for Uſe.

2*d* Promiſe, *I will give him a white Stone*, &c. There is no Doubt, this has Alluſion to ſome ancient Cuſtom well known in the Apoſtles Times. We find of old, they made much Uſe of ſmall Stones, eſpecially in giving their Suffrages, when the Vote was about a Matter of Moment; and managed them the ſame Way, as now in many Places of the World they do their Billets: But I ſee not how this can take Place here. Others tell us, They uſe to beſtow Stones, very white, upon theſe who had acquit themſelves beſt at the ſolemn Games: This I find many fond of here. But a learned Author has ſnatched this from them, by proving theſe little Stones were given them before theſe Exerciſes; and that theſe Stones had Numbers on them, by which they knew when it was their Turn, and thereby Confuſion was avoided. Others tell us, It was a very common Cuſtom, eſpecially among the *Romans*, to intimate their Sentences of Abſolution by a *white Stone*, and of Condemnation by a *black One.* This is what I find the Generality of Expoſitors go in with here, and ſay, It is the Emblem of Juſtification intimate to the Soul. I confeſs, tho' this hath the Authority of great Men to ſupport it, there are ſeveral Things in it hard to get over: As, 1. That the *Spirit of God*, revealing to the Churches the richeſt Treaſures of his Mercy, ſhould do it in the Language of the *Gentiles*: We have not many Inſtances of this in Scripture; and when they occur, they are rather *Metaphorical* Alluſions, which could not be ſhunn'd, and expreſs

expreſs the Thing to the Life; as the *Spirit's* ſpeaking of our Chriſtian *Warfare*, alludes to Fighting, Running, Wreſtling, *&c.* But here is a deliberate *Emblem*, which ſhould bear the indelible Character of God's ſpecial Favour to a Soul: And to repreſent it by the *Heatheniſh* Ceremony of Abſolution, to me ſeems to need more to ſupport it than they have yet brought. 2. It will not be pat to the Purpoſe here; for there is not one Word of a judicial Diſquiſition to bring it in upon, all is with Alluſion to our ſpiritual Exerciſe; and to get a white Stone of Abſolution upon the Back of it, will not couple right with me. 3. This ſeems to be one of the laſt Favours a Believer meets with on this Side of Eternity: And if by this *white Stone* we underſtand Aſſurance, as the moſt Part of Proteſtants do, it will follow, That Aſſurance is one of the laſt Things a Believer can hope to meet with; which is not agreeable to the Analogy of Faith. 4. Upon the ſame Head, this does not appear to be the juſt Senſe of the Word, becauſe this Stone once received, will not be loſt again: This ſeems not obſcurely to be pointed at, when they get it as a laſting, yea everlaſting Pledge of his Favour. Yet Saints feel, to their ſad Experience, that they loſe their *Aſſurance*. 5. Our Lord had juſt immediately before uſed an Emblem from his own Word, *viz.* the *Manna*, whereby he repreſents the *gracious Communications* of himſelf to Believers; and, Can we think he would inſtantly adapt an Heathen Ceremony, to repreſent ſome further Communications of himſelf to his own? For, be this *white Stone* what it will, it appears manifeſtly to be ſomewhat beſtowed after the Feeding on Manna: And when that is over, to be ſure the Scripture is not ſo barren, but might have afforded an Emblem more to the Purpoſe. Now, let us even bring home the Fault to ourſelves, who are not ſo well acquainted with the Oracles of God as we ſhould be, elſe theſe Things would not be ſo puzzling to us.

I own it will be no eaſy Matter to ſupply the Place of this ſo univerſally received Opinion; yet I ſhall take a more *ſcriptural Way* of Working, to find, if not the true Meaning, yet a more probable than that which is given: And I lay down theſe few *Preliminaries*, 1. Whatever this white Stone is, it muſt be conſequential to our Communion with Chriſt; and ſo it is not Juſtification, but ſomething that is a moſt eminent and notable Fruit of it. 2. This *Stone* is capable of *Impreſſion* or Graving, and after a fine Manner, while it is compared to Writing. 3. For its Colour, it is *white*, not only that it may the better receive any other *Colour*, and retain it; but alſo to point out its Purity and Beauty. Now, when all theſe are laid together, it appears to have a manifeſt Alluſion to theſe *Onyx-ſtones, on which the Names of the Children of* Iſrael *were engraven, and put upon the Shoulders of the high Prieſt, when he went into the Holy of Holies before the Lord, for a Memorial*, Exod. xxviii. 8, *&c.* This was a Type of God's Appointment, to repreſent the Acceptance that his People had through Jeſus Chriſt, the great high Prieſt. And *John* having told us in the firſt *Chapter*, that whom Chriſt hath waſhen in his own Blood, are made *Kings and Prieſts unto God*: So here, they have a notable Ornament pertaining to the Prieſt, the *white Onyx-ſtone*; for the fineſt of them are exceeding white, and are reckoned the better the whiter: And ſo this is to aſſure them they would be moſt acceptable unto God through himſelf. The only Difficulty I now foreſee, is, that the Word is not Λιθος, but Ψηφος, which properly ſignifies a little Stone, and has, they alledge, always ſomething of Supputation comprehended therein. I ſhall not ſtand in the Examination of theſe Things, which are frivolous, and beſides falſe; for it has a Notion of Numbring in it only, becauſe they uſe to count by them. But the ſame Word is uſed to expreſs the Stone in the Bladder, and that by Authors unqueſtionably well-vers'd in the *Greek*, in which Numbring or Voicing is not ſo much as thought on: So that, by this, our Lord tells them they would be accepted in the Beloved, and would be a Memorial of their Faithfulneſs to his Covenant to all the Ages of Eternity. Tho' this Senſe of it ſhould not be *true*, yet I am ſure it is more *Scriptural*, and therefore ought to be more taking with Chriſtians.

But we have further to note about this *white Stone*, theſe Things, 1. *It has a new Name written on it.* To be ſure this is not a bare Name, but a ſubſtantial Deſignation, ſuch as they never had before: Such a Name as this we read of, *Iſa.* lvi. 5. *I will give in my Houſe, and within my Walls, a Place and a Name better than of Sons and Daughters: I will give them an everlaſting Name.* And to the ſame Purpoſe it is promiſed, *Iſa.* lxii. 2. *And thou ſhalt be called by a new Name, which the Mouth of the Lord ſhall name*; which to be ſure is a Name of Diſtinction, and in Oppoſition to theſe Deſignations they formerly had: And ſo it is ſaid afterwards, *v.* 4. *Thou ſhalt no more be termed Forſaken, nor thy Land any more be termed Deſolate; but thou ſhalt be called* Hephzi-bah [*my Delight is in her*] *and thy Land* Beulah [*married.*] Now, tho' this ſhould have its only Deſign to point out the Goſpel-State, as generally it is thought, yet it may be of Uſe here, that we may know there will be as great

Difference, if not greater, betwixt the former Manifeſtations the Church was bleſt with, and what they afterwards ſhould meet with; as there was betwixt the *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian Church*, which is vaſtly great. It is further ſaid of this *new Name, Which no Man knoweth, ſaving he that receiveth it.* Where it ſeems not to ſay, There can be no Knowledge of it in any Degree, however imperfect, there being nothing in Grace or Glory, whereof we may not attain to ſome wide Notions; but the ſpiritual Diſcerning thereof: For as *the natural Man knows not the Things of the Spirit of God*, 1 *Cor.* ii. 14. ſo the ſpiritual Man knows not perfectly what will fall to their Share afterwards; As the Apoſtle acknowledges, 1 *John* iii. 2. *Beloved, now we are the Sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be: But we know, when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* From the whole, I am ready to think this *new Name* is nothing elſe than that new Diſpoſition wrought by the Spirit of God, before they be near the Threſhold of Glory; when there will be a greater Change made upon them in an Inſtant, than what it was poſſible for them to be ſenſible of, from their firſt Converſion to that Time; yea, which now themſelves can have no perfect Apprehenſion of. 2. It is ſaid of this Stone, *I will give it*: To be ſure then it was ſomething they had not then met with; yea, were not to meet with it till they were in Chriſt Conquerors.

Theſe who are for the Prophetical Meaning of theſe Epiſtles, make this the third Period of the Church to begin where the ſecond ended; in which they do not, as we ſaw before, agree. And they are no leſs divided about the End of it, which, ſome think, was in the Time of the *Albigenſes*, about 1242: Some bring it down to the 1300; others again will have it end at the Riſe of *Antichriſt*, about the 600, or 606: And they talk a great deal about the inviſible State of the Church for a long Time in this Period, which they make to be the Meaning of the Concluſion. But it muſt be owned, they have by far much more Subtilty than Solidity: Beſides, all of them build their Hypotheſis upon meer begged Grounds; ſo that we muſt yield them one large Half of what they would be at, before they be able to prove the other. It muſt be owned they diſcover no ſmall Stock of Ingine; but I cannot miſs to obſerve, that *Brightman*, when he tells us they point at the ſeveral Periods of the Church univerſal, yet in his Application makes them refer to particular Churches: In this, a Body would think that good Man had forgot himſelf.

EPISTLE IV.

18 And unto the Angel of the Church in Thyatira, write, Theſe Things ſaith the Son of God, who hath his Eyes like unto a Flame of Fire, and his Feet are like fine Braſs.

THE Reſidence of this Church is *Thyatira*, where *Lydia the Seller of Purple was born*, Acts xvi. 14. It matters little whence it had this Name, whether from *Seleucus Nicanor* King of *Syria*, upon the News of the Queen's being delivered of a Daughter, he being at this City the Time, called it *Thyatira*, q. Θυγατειρα, or otherways. *Geographers* tell us, It lay upon the River *Lycus*; or, according to others, *Caicus*. It was the Southermoſt of all the ſeven Churches, and was to the Eaſtward of *Pergamos*. It ſeems to have been famous for little more than that Chriſt had a Church in it, whom he honoured with this fourth Epiſtle.

The *Characters* Chriſt takes to himſelf in this Epiſtle, are three: The firſt is, *The Son of God*, which we have not in the firſt Chapter, but he is there deſigned, *v.* 13. *The Son of Man.* When both are put together, they aſſert the two Natures of Chriſt to coaleſce in one Perſon: The one alſo may note his Exaltation, and the other his Humiliation. The other two we had, *Chap.* i. *v.* 14, 15. where we explained them. They all ſeem to be exactly adapted to the State and Condition of this Church: The firſt comprehends his Authority, *All Judgment being committed to the Son*; The ſecond his Omniſcience, whereof he gives a notable Evidence, while he mentions both their Perfections and Imperfections; The third declares his Stedfaſtneſs, and the Judgments he will execute upon his Enemies.

19 I know thy Works, and Charity, and Service, and Faith, and thy Patience, and thy Works, and the laſt to be more than the firſt.

20 Not-

20 Notwithſtanding, I have a few Things againſt thee, becauſe thou ſuffereſt that Woman Jezabel, which calleth herſelf a Propheteſs, to teach, and to ſeduce my Servants to commit Fornication, and to eat Things ſacrificed to Idols.

21 And I gave her Space to repent of her Fornication, and ſhe repented not.

22 Behold, I will caſt her into a Bed, and them that commit Adultery with her into great Tribulation, except they repent of their Deeds.

23 And I will kill her Children with Death, and all the Churches ſhall know that I am he which ſearcheth the Reins and Hearts: And I will give unto every one of you, according to your Works.

24 But unto you I ſay, and unto the reſt in Thyatira, as many as have not this Doctrine, and which have not known the Depths of Satan, as they ſpeak, I will put upon you none other Burden,

25 But that which ye have already, hold faſt till I come.

In this we have, 1. A Commendation, *v.* 19. 2. A Challenge, *v.* 20, 21. 3. A Threatning, to *v.* 24. 4. An Exhortation, in the other two.

I. After the common Preface, we have this Church commended for ſeveral Things, which are in themſelves commendable; and this Praiſe is the more to be noticed, that it comes from Chriſt, who exactly knew all theſe Virtues to abound in her.

1. Her *Charity*, or rather *Love*: And it not being reſtricted, we are to take it in its largeſt Senſe, as comprehending Love to both God and Man; that *Love* which is deſigned, *The Fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. xiii. 10.

2. Her *Service*, or *Deaconſhip*, i. e. their Care of the Poor, in contributing for, and ſupplying their Neceſſities; this is a good Evidence of the former.

3. Her *Faith*: By which ſome underſtand the Purity of Doctrine, others their ſtedfaſt Adherence to the Profeſſion thereof; and ſome take it to comprehend the Exerciſe of ſaving Faith. I ſee no Reaſon why we may not admit them all; eſpecially the Connexion being ſo near, that One in earneſt includes all.

4. Her *Patience*, a chief Fruit of Faith; of which we ſpoke, *v.* 2.

5. Her *Works*, i. e. holy Practice; another Fruit of Faith, and a ſure Work of a lively Faith, *Jam.* ii. 26. *For Faith without Works is dead.*

6. Her Increaſe in all theſe, *And the laſt to be more than the firſt.* Some reſtrict this allenarly to Work, becauſe it is of the ſame *Gender*; others think it ſhould be extended to them all: If to one, to be ſure it muſt alſo to the reſt; For *the Path of the Juſt is a ſhining Light, that ſhineth more and more*, &c. *Prov.* iv. 18.

II. We have a *Challenge* reached to this Church of *Thyatira*, and that,

1. More generally, *I have a few Things againſt thee*; of this before, *v.* 4.

2. We have a particular Condeſcenſion, or a main Ground of Controverſy, *Becauſe thou ſuffereſt that Woman* Jezabel, &c. by which it would appear their Crime was rather a Sin of Omiſſion than Commiſſion. It is not ſaid they countenanced this *Jezabel*, much leſs that they encouraged her; But they did not make Uſe of the Power Chriſt had given them againſt her, to ſet a Mark upon her, and by Excommunication to caſt her out of the Church, as the Church of *Epheſus* had tried the falſe Apoſtles: And therefore our Lord quarrels the Negligence of this Church. What we have more to ſay anent this Perſon, we ſhall give it in Anſwer to theſe Two Queſtions, and thereby abſolve the Whole of this Verſe and the next.

Queſt. 1. Who this *Jezabel* was?

Anſwer 1. It is generally agreed, this was not the proper Name of any one particular Perſon, becauſe it is originally an *Hebrew*, or, according to others, a *Syraick* Word, none of which at this Time prevailed in Leſſer *Aſia*. Nor can I commend them who labour to fetch the Senſe of the Word from its Origination, and ſay it is compoſed of two Words, whereof one ſignifies *Wo*, and the other a *Dunghill*; for it is not to be ſuppoſed the King of the *Zidonians* would beſtow ſuch a naſty Name upon his fair Daughter, who was afterwards married to *Ahab* King of *Iſrael*, 1 Kings xvi. 31. But, even when it is allowed to be a borrowed Name, as that of *Balaam* was before, becauſe of ſome Affinity betwixt the Principles and Practices of the old *Jezabel*, and her that walkt ſo much in her Footſteps, there is no ſmall Debate; ſome contending,

That this *Jezabel* is an Emblem of *Antichriſt*, or the *Whore of* Babylon; others ſay, She was the Wife of a Biſhop; others, That ſhe was ſome notable Sorcereſs, who abetted the Doctrine and Practice of the *Nicolaitans*. As for the firſt, when we come to examine the Threatning againſt her, it will appear, it will not agree to *Spiritual Babylon*. As for the ſecond, it is but a groundleſs Story; and therefore, I anſwer,

2. Tho' this be not the *proper Name* of any Perſon, yet it may be a moſt proper Name to expreſs the Vices of ſome particular Perſon; eſpecially, that it was the proper Name of one of the lewdeſt Perſons in the World: And therein we may find theſe few Things, 1. That this Perſon was a Woman. 2. That ſhe was of noble Extract, and of great Subſtance; both which fitted her to ſeduce. 3. She was a *Witch*, in Compact with the Devil; ſo was the old *Jezabel*, 2 *Kings* ix. 22, 30. This Perſon uſed Divination, and pretended to be a Propheteſs. 4. She was a painted Whore; ſo was the old *Jezabel*, who was famous therefore, and here we read of the Uncleanneſs of this Woman.

Queſt. 2. What was the Sin of this *Jezabel*?

Anſwer. In general, She was a great Promoter of Hereſy, probably that of the *Nicolaitans*. It is obſervable, there was never a new Sect of Hereſy, but they made it their Buſineſs to get ſome *She Propagatrix* of their Errors, as the readieſt Way to debauch Profeſſors from the Truth. It would be tedious to run through theſe; but, in our own Time, it is known how much Miſchief was done in *Europe* by that infamous Woman *Antonia Bourignion*. But more particularly about this Woman, we have theſe Crimes mentioned in the Text; 1. She gave out herſelf as a *Propheteſs*, and pretended to a Spirit of Divination: This ſhe might do the more plauſibly, that in the primitive Church it was no extraordinary Thing to meet with Women who had that Gift from God: So we read, *Acts* xxi. 9. that *Philip* the Evangeliſt *had four Daughters, Virgins, which did propheſy*. Some, however, are of the Mind, ſhe did not ſo much pretend to that, as ſet up for a *Doctrix*; and therefore, it is ſaid, ſhe taught, *i. e.* ſhe uſurped the Work of the Miniſtry, and preached publickly: Which is againſt an expreſs Apoſtolick Rule, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 34. *Let your Women keep Silence in the Churches, for it is not permitted unto them to ſpeak*; Even theſe who had the Gift of Prophecy, and much leſs others who wanted it. 2. She ſeems to have been a *Perſecutor*, for that was one of old *Jezabel*'s great Sins, and it is a notable Engine of Seduction; And beſides, here we read of the Patience of this Church: But whether her Power reached ſo far, as ſhe could in any colourable Manner exerciſe Force, or if it was only by her Influence, it is not ſaid. 3. She did actually ſeduce ſome of *Chriſt's Servants*, i. e. as ſome think, *Miniſters*; others ſay, Only *Private Chriſtians*, who had devoted themſelves to the Service of Chriſt; and tempted them to theſe two Evils, Uncleanneſs and Idolatry, at leaſt, in ſo far as they ate what was offered to *Idols*. Of both theſe we ſpoke before on *v.* 14.

Again, we have the Aggravation of theſe Sins of *Jezabel*, v. 21. *I gave her Space to repent of her Fornication*, &c. By which our Lord ſhews what a Heart-obdurating Evil is in theſe Sins; for they not only defile, but harden: For, while it is ſaid, *He gave her Space*, it imports not only Time, but alſo Calls and Place for Repentance, and likewiſe Threatnings; all which had hitherto been deſpiſed, and therefore they were to expect no other Seaſons of that Nature being allowed.

III. The *Accompliſhment* of that terrible Threatning we have, *v.* 22, 23. which we have in Three Branches.

1. Againſt herſelf; *Behold, I will caſt her into a Bed.* Some by *Bed* underſtand *Security*, i. e. a Blaſting-ſtroke, to bring her into the Condition of theſe, who ſaid, *Iſa.* xxviii. 15. *We have made a Covenant with Death, and with Hell are we at Agreement*; which is certainly a heavy Judgment. But there ſeems to be ſomething more imported here, that this Bed was to be a worſe, and more deplorable Condition, than the great Affliction that was to be the Portion of her Paramours; which is further evident from the Verb in the Threatning, *I will caſt*, i. e. with great Violence, and points at the miſerable End of the true *Jezabel*, who was thrown down headlong from a high Window, 2 *Kings* ix. 33. And *Bed* may bear an Eye to the Bed of her Pleaſure and Feaſts; for they in that Country ate upon Beds, as well as ſlept: And on theſe Beds ſhe had laid herſelf down with Deliberation and Satisfaction; but here ſhe was to be *caſt down*, which may point at ſome lothſom or lingering Diſeaſe, accompanied with Anguiſh and Horror, and will end in Death; and ſo ſhe might read Sin in her Judgment.

2. There is a Threatning againſt her Lovers, *I will caſt them that committed Adultery with her into great Tribulation.* This certainly has in it ſome heavy Miſery, and probably temporal; but, whether it was to be a Stroke immediately from the Hand of God, or if Enemies were to be let looſe upon them, or what other Method was to be

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uſed, the Text being ſilent, we muſt not be curious. However, here an open Door of Eſcape is left to them, which ſeems to be ſhut upon her, *Except they repent of their Deeds*; the Reaſon of this may be, becauſe ſhe had ſeduced them, and in a Manner ſtolen them out of the Ways of God: This is apparently the laſt Call they would meet with to Repentance, and ſo the laſt Offer of Mercy.

3. There is a Threatning alſo againſt her Children, *I will kill her Children with Death.* This is agreeable to the Certification in the ſecond Commandment. Some, by Children here, mean her natural Children begot in Uncleanneſs, as the Lord dealt with *David*'s adulterous Child; for he told him, *The Child ſhall ſurely die*, 1 Sam. xii. 14. Others, by Children, underſtand her *Proſelytes* whom ſhe had ſeduced: As the true Profeſſors of Chriſt, who are gained by the Goſpel, are called the *Children of the Kingdom*, and Children of Light; ſo theſe that are perverted are Children of Whoredoms. This verifies what our Lord ſays, *Mat.* xv. 14. *If the Blind lead the Blind, both ſhall fall into the Ditch.* There is a peculiar Phraſe here, to *kill with Death*; which ſome take to be a *Hebraiſm*, and that the Meaning is no more but they ſhould certainly die: Others, that by Death here, is to be underſtood the Peſtilence, which in Scripture is often by Eminency called *Death*: And ſome think, that *Killing* and *Death* being put together, will ſignify a violent Death, whether under Form of Juſtice, or by the Hand of an Enemy.

But, be the Way of this Vengeance as it will, we ſee God will make it evident to all the Churches, that his Hand is in theſe Plagues; and by them will glorify two of his eſſential Attributes, 1 His Omniſcience; *And all the Churches ſhall know, that I am he that ſearcheth the Reins and Hearts.* When the Wicked proſper, even the *People of God* are ready to entertain hard Thoughts of God, as if he did not ſee or move himſelf in the Vindication of his People, by the Puniſhment of his and their Enemies: At this Time he was to remove from their Hearts all Thoughts of this Nature, when they ſhould behold his Judgments ſo exactly adapted to their Sins. It is ſaid, the *Churches ſhall know*; not but that others might alſo know, if they would advert; yet it is a great Truth, others will mind theſe Matters very little: And we have the Language of the Wicked expreſſed, *Pſal.* x. 1. *God hath forgotten, he hath hidden his Face, he will never ſee it.* 2. His holy Juſtice; *I will give unto every one of you according to his Works.* This ſeems to be more extenſive; for tho' only the Churches would acknowledge his Omniſcience, yet *every one* ſhould be convinced that his *Judgments* are ſquare to the Guilt of the Offenders; yea, and that his Rewards are proportionable to the Works of his own People: *He is the Judge of all the Earth*; and therefore, we may aſſure ourſelves, *he will do right.*

IV. There is an *Exhortation*, *v.* 24, 25. where we ſhall notice, 1. Who are exhorted. And, 2. What is exhorted to.

1. The *Perſons*, at leaſt, are of two Sorts, expreſt in different Characters, and both of theſe differ from *Jezabel* and her *Followers*: And therefore it is introduced with the adverſative Particle *But*, hereby diſcriminating betwixt theſe before-mentioned, and theſe to whom Chriſt is now ſpeaking. The firſt Sort of Perſons are theſe mentioned in the ſecond Perſon, *I ſay unto you*, i. e. Angel in the *ſingular* Number, *v.* 18. but now in the *plural*: This is a new Proof that *Angel* is a *Collective*, comprehending *many*; for in this *Angel* is wrapt up all the *Miniſters* of the Churches, and it is evident there were mo than one in this Church; for at that Time great Men had not got the Cuſtom of ſpeaking of themſelves or others in the *plural* Number. 2. The next Sort of Perſons ſeem to be the ſerious and upright *Chriſtians* in this Church, who are deſcribed in Oppoſition to *Jezabel* and her Children, *As many as have not this Doctrine*, or hold not this Doctrine; for it is neceſſary ſometimes to know Errors, in order to beware of them: But they are ſuch as did not believe them, profeſs nor practiſe them. 'Tis a bleſt Evidence of a Perſon's deſirable State, that they are not led away of the Wicked into their Errors. Another Part of their Character is, *Which have not known the Depths of Satan, as they ſpeak.* There is a certain Knowledge of the *Depths of Satan*, which is moſt commendable, and very neceſſary to a Chriſtian; this we find the Apoſtle value himſelf and all other Believers on, 2 *Cor.* ii. 11. *For we are not ignorant of his Devices.* But then that is a Knowledge of them, ſo as to eſcape them; as the wary Traveller will be at Pains to notice all the foul and dangerous Steps of the Way, that he fall not in them. So that the Knowledge here ſpoken of, is different from that, and muſt take in a Knowledge of Approbation and Compliance: Theſe are called *Depths*, for indeed ſo are all the Springs of *Hereſy* dark and myſterious, and perplexed with as many Windings and Foldings as the *old Serpent* can give them; and therefore they are here ſo deſigned by him. The only Difficulty in this Verſe is, that interjected Clauſe (*as they ſpeak.*) Some connect it with what follows, as if theſe *Hereticks* ſhould have pretended their

Principles introduced true Chriſtian Liberty. I make no Doubt, but all falſe Teachers take this as a very popular Argument to midwife their miſhapen Conceptions into Peoples Minds, that they will have more Liberty; and therefore, they think, what theſe ſpoke falſly, Chriſt's ſpeaks truly: But, we ſhould conſider, theſe who thus comment, are guilty of a double Blunder; 1. They make our Lord borrow Expreſſions from theſe worſt Sort of Hereticks; And again, They mar the Conſtruction, from *they* in the Plural, to *the* in the Singular Number. Muſt we not note this? ſeeing it will help to ſeek the Senſe another Way, which we may have at a very eaſy Rate, but by altering the Punctation, and making it more agreeable to the Conſtruction, and it will run thus, *Which have not known the Depth* [*of Satan*] *as they ſpeak.* And then, we have the Name they beſtowed upon their Principles, *Depths*, i. e. *Myſteries*, obſcure but fine Speculations: And to be ſure, they would not add *of Satan*; for that they would refuſe, ſeeing *Jezabel* gave out herſelf as a *Propheteſs*. No Doubt, they gave as great *Elogia* to their Darling Principles, as the *Papiſts* gave their *Bombaſtick* Schoolmen; but here that Addition [*of Satan*] is made by our Lord, who perfectly knew the Truth of the Thing, for he is the *true Witneſs*. And here I think ends the full Purpoſe, and ſo the Period ſhould be at it, and the 25 *v.* begin, *I will put upon*, &c. Our Lord ſpeaks to *as many* as have theſe two Characters, to them all, and to no more; ſo that here plainly there is a Difference made.

2. We have the Thing exhorted to, and in it the Introduction and Duty, 1. The Preface, *I will put upon you none other Burden but that which ye have.* Which ſays plainly, theſe falſe Teachers were endeavouring to burden Mens Conſciences with Things that are nothing a-kin to Religion. Some ſay, They were great Doters on *Ceremonies*, which they made of more Neceſſity to Salvation, than the moſt eſſential *Principles*. This was an old Device of *Satan*, and therefore theſe Ceremonies are called a *Burdenſom Yoke*, Acts xv. 10. And when the Apoſtles in Council were examining the Matter, they deliver themſelves to the ſame Purpoſe, *It ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt, and to us, to lay upon you no greater Burden, than theſe neceſſary Things*, Acts xv. 28. Chriſt was not to burden them with any Burden but his own, of which he ſays, *Mat.* xi. 30. *My Burden is light.* And this they had already, and are commended for their bearing of the ſame, *v.* 19. 2. The Duty, *Hold faſt till I come*: Where we have the Act, *Hold faſt*, i. e. Perſiſt in theſe Duties and Graces he had before commended to them, till he ſhould either come to take Vengeance on *Jezabel*, or rather to Judgment; to ſhew us there were to be no other Alterations in the Diſpenſation of Grace, all by his Orders are to continue in the ſame Channel to the End of the World.

Follows the Concluſion of the Epiſtle.

26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my Works unto the End, to him will I give Power over the Nations,

27 (And he ſhall rule them with a Rod of Iron, as the Veſſels of a Potter ſhall they be broken to Shivers) even as I received of my Father.

28 And I will give him the Morning-ſtar.

29 He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches.

The Concluſion in this is longer and more material than any of the reſt; where are, 1. Two very ſtupendious Promiſes, with the Character of theſe who may hope to meet with them. 2. The uſual Exhortation in the other Epiſtles.

I. We have two very *glorious Promiſes*, which he introduceth with the Characters of theſe who may lay Claim to them: 1ſt, *He that overcometh*; which is not to be meant only of their ſtanding out againſt *Jezabel*, but to *overcome* muſt be extended to that Senſe we gave of it, *v.* 7. 2*d* Character is, *Keepeth my Works unto the End.* The *Works* of Chriſt are oppoſed to the *Works* of the *Devil*, and of the Fleſh, *John* viii. 4. *Gal.* v. 19. By theſe Works we are not to underſtand the Miracles that he wrought while in the Fleſh, theſe indeed we may obſerve and remember as Grounds of Praiſe; nor yet his Works as Mediator, by finiſhing whereof he reconciled God unto the Elect; theſe Works we ſhould know, love, and ground our Faith on: But the Works principally meant here, are the Works which Chriſt has commanded, as the Works of Faith and Love, concerning which he ſays, *If ye love me, keep my Commandments.* And further, by his Works, we are to underſtand what he works in the Souls of his People by his Spirit; theſe *Fruits of the Spirit* we muſt preſerve and improve by Exerciſe, as the Word *Keep* always in Scripture ſignifies, when the Commands

mands of God are the Object of it: We must keep them to the End of our Lives, and through all the Steps of our Life. We are next to view the Promises.

1*st* Promise, which in all its Parts may be looked upon as very surprizing; I shall notice in it, 1. The Promise itself, 2. The Holding of the Thing, 3. The Exercise and Effect thereof.

(1.) The Promise itself, *To him will I give Power over the Nations.* There are some very hungry Senses given of this, by these who have Recourse to *Allegories*; for they make it signify no more, than that Christ would raise them to a Degree of the Ministry; and then they are betrayed to wretched Shifts to make it out, and they make the *Gospel* that *Iron Rod* by which they break the Nations, and so subject them to Christ: But yet this speaks not one Word of their Conviction and Conversion, which are the proper Objects of the Gospel; but here Mention is made of their Destruction, so that this will not take. Others again contend for a twofold Power to the Church, one Spiritual, and another Civil and Coercive: Of this Mind were the *Jews*, and the *Enthusiasts* follow their Footsteps; *Antichrist* had it from the *Jews*, and the *Enthusiasts* borrow it from the *Papists*: But our Lord gives a quite different Account of his Kingdom, while he says, *John* xviii. 36. *My Kingdom is not of this World; if my Kingdom were of this World, then would my Servants fight* Fire and Sword are used to force the Way of Error, but not to prepare the Way of Truth. But truly the very Words themselves turn off both these Senses: For the Promise is made to *the Overcomers, and them that keep Christ's Works to the End.* So that this Power is not a Civil Power, and as little a Spiritual Power in Time; for it takes not Place further till Time be gone, for not till then are we compleat Conquerors. This then will accresce to the Saints in the Morning of the Resurrection; And thus the Psalmist speaks of the Wicked, and the Power the Saints have over them, *Like Sheep they are laid in the Grave; Death shall feed on them, and the Upright shall have Dominion over them in the Morning,* Psal. xlix. 14. And then indeed their Honour is very notable; for, says the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* vi. 2. *Know ye not that the Saints shall judge the World?* But this is not all; for, by Vertue of the Saints Communion with Christ their Head, even in Time they shall have Dominion over the Nations, as we have it promised, *Isa.* liv. 16, 17. *No Weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every Tongue that shall rise against thee in Judgment, thou shalt condemn; this is the Heritage of the Servants of the Lord.*

(2.) There is the Manner of their Holding of this notable Privilege, illustrated by an Example, *Even as I received of my Father.* We have an Expression to the same Purpose, *Luke* xxii. 29. *I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.* We must not dream of any *Equality* here, but it contains in the Meaning thereof these Things, 1. As Christ was first to overcome, and then to possess; so were they in his Strength to conquer, and then with him to reign. 2. That Power would be like Christ's, for ever; for none should take their Crown from them.

(3.) The Exercise and Effect thereof; And *he shall rule them as with a Rod of Iron, and as Vessels of a Potter shall they be broken to Shivers.* This is the Promise made to Christ himself, *Psal.* ii. 9. which here he repeats to this *Church*, and engages they shall be interested in all his Pieces of Exaltation: And to assure the Wicked, whatever Freedom they now use with the People of God, the Time is coming, when they, for all their present Greatness, will be but as a Potsheard against an Iron Rod in the Hand of the Righteous.

2*d* Promise is, *v.* 28. *I will give him the Morning-Star.* The *Star* that comes under that Name, and is a certain Evidence of the approaching Day, is sufficiently known; nor doubt I but this has Allusion thereto, to advertise them their Night of Darkness and Affliction will come to an End; that God would honour them with a certain Sign of the Morning of Comfort, before it should come. Again, we find the saving Influences of the Spirit of Grace, in Regeneration, upon the Back of a Night of natural Darkness, designed, *The Day-Star arising upon our Hearts,* 2 Pet. i. 19. It is true, this is, by some, understood of the Resurrection; and so do a great many here also: However it be, we are sure, by the Morning-Star we are to understand Jesus Christ, who calls himself by that Designation, *Rev.* xxii. 16. *I am the bright Morning-Star.* Even *Balaam* gave that Testimony of Christ, long before his Incarnation, *Numb.* xxiv. 17. *There shall come a Star out of* Jacob, *and a Sceptre shall rise out of* Israel: Where this Star is called a *Ruling-Star*; and so it is a further Explication of the former Promise, and confirms our Sense of it, That their Power was to be in and through Jesus Christ, who has all Power committed to him. And this may be further cleared from what the Prophet says of Christ, *Isa.* xlix. 6. *I will also give thee for a Light unto the* Gentiles, *that thou mayst be my Salvation unto the Ends of the Earth.* So that here we have several Senses, none of them to be despised; The Deliverance of the Churches from

the Power of their Enemies; freſh and new Incomes of the *Spirit* of *Grace* in the Souls of the Elect; eſpecially in the Calling of the *Gentiles*, and the glorious Manifeſtation of Chriſt in the Morning of the final Reſurrection. Nor do I ſee any Reaſon, why all of them may not conſpire to make up the full Senſe of this gracious Promiſe; and ſo we ſhall find a great Bundle of Mercies wrapt up therein: As, 1. The heavenly Original and Seat of this Light. 2. The intrinſick Light of this Star. 3. The advantageous Influence thereof, to guide the Traveller by Sea or Land. 4. A ſure Evidence of a greater Light to follow, which will make Amends for all the gloomy Diſpenſations of his People; for then will their drooping Minds be raiſed up. The Deſign of all this might be to carry this Church off from the Allurements of *Jezabel*, and her Faction, by the firm Hopes of ſomething to come, which would far eclipſe all the ſinful Glory her Party appeared in; and ſo, to bring them to that which was the Exerciſe of the Apoſtles and other Saints before them, *Who lookt not to the Things which are ſeen, becauſe they are temporal; But look'd to theſe Things which are not ſeen, becauſe they are eternal.*

II. There is the uſual Exhortation in the other Epiſtles, *v.* 29. where we have nothing to remark, but that, in the firſt three Epiſtles, this Exhortation went before the Promiſes; but in this, and the three following, it is ſubjoined to the Promiſes. This, by ſome, is pretended to contain ſome notable Myſtery; but if there be, 'tis evident they have not hit it, nor ſhall we be at Pains to enquire about it.

Theſe who are for the *Prophetical* Senſe of theſe Epiſtles, apprehend they have more Ground for their Poſitions in this than any of the former; which indeed they are at no ſmall Pains, in a moſt ingenious Manner, to improve. This they make the fourth Period of the Church; and they differ as much about the End, as they did about its Beginning. Theſe who count from 600, or 606, when they ſay *Antichriſt* roſe, make it to end in the Beginning of the tenth Centry; and ſo here they think they have an Account of the Riſe of the *Man of Sin* to his greateſt Height: And theſe who begin it 1240, or 1300, bring its Period to the Reformation; and ſome condeſcend upon the particular Year 1520: And they are at great Pains to apply the Hiſtory of *Jezabel* to *Antichriſt*, wherein, it cannot be denied, there is no ſmall Affinity; and the Promiſes, to the Power of God that appeared at the *Reformation*. Yet, One might be tempted to think, the great Commendations paſt upon this Church, ſhould remove much of this; nor are they at Pains to conſider them: And eſpecially, it is inſinuate, that it was in the Power of this Church, which no doubt was in a fixed State, to have done more againſt *Jezabel* than they did; elſe, how could they be challenged, that they had *ſuffered that Woman*? As for their Pleadings from the Promiſes, that they may make them jump to their Deſign, they turn them into Prophecies, whoſe Accompliſhment they make to be, when ſo many Countries in *Germany*, ſo many Cities in *France*, beſides the Kingdoms of *Denmark*, *Sweden*, and then of *Britain*, fell off from the *Pope*, and ſubjected themſelves to Chriſt's Yoke. The Potſheards broken into Shivers, they make the ſnatching ſo many *Monaſteries* and *rich Benefices* from the *Pope*'s Intereſt, and diſpoſing of them otherwiſe. It muſt be owned, all this, and a great many other curious Things they advance, may do much to amuſe; but, how their ſlender Proof can gain upon any reaſonable Man's Convictions, I ſee not; Eſpecially that theſe Promiſes are not made to any particular Period of the Church, but to all Overcomers, whatever Age they flouriſh in. And the ſame may be ſaid for all the other Promiſes annexed to the haill other Epiſtles; ſo that one victorious Saint may juſtly expect, and ſhall be certainly poſſeſſed of them all: And therefore it is out of the Way, to fetch an Argument to ſtrengthen a particular Conceit, from the Annexation of a Promiſe to this or that Epiſtle.

In the third Chapter we have a Partition juſt like the ſecond; for it divides itſelf into three Epiſtles, as ſo many diſtinct Purpoſes: In which Order we are to conſider it.

CHAP. III.

EPISTLE V.

1 AND unto the Angel of the Church in Sardis, write, Theſe Things ſaith he that hath the ſeven Spirits of God, and the ſeven

ſeven Stars; I know thy Works, that thou haſt a Name that thou liveſt, and art dead.

THE Abode of this Church was in the City of *Sardis*, which in its Day was very conſiderable; both becauſe it was the chief City of *Lydia*, as alſo becauſe the rich *Cræſus* had his Palace in it. It was ſituate at the Side of Mount *Imolus*, near the River *Pactolus*, in a very rich Soil. Near it is that precious Stone called *Sarda*, whereof the fineſt Seals were made, it being very pliable to the Graver's Tool; and had its Name from the City, tho' others ſay the City was deſigned from it.

The Deſignations Chriſt takes to himſelf in his Epiſtle to this Church are two, 1. *He that hath the ſeven Spirits*, which we explained, *Chap.* i. *v.* 4. 2. *He that hath the ſeven Stars*; of which, ſee *Chap.* i. *v.* 16. Theſe are perfectly adapted to the Condition of this dead and lazy Church, whom he would have caſt their Eyes to him, who had what they want; Spirit to quicken them, and his Aſſiſtance to lend unto their Miniſters, that from them they might come to the Knowledge of theſe Things that concerned their Peace, before they were hid from their Eyes: So that under the Offer of Mercy is a Threatning couched.

2 Be watchful, and ſtrengthen the Things which remain, that are ready to die: For I have not found thy Works perfect before God.

3 Remember therefore how thou haſt received, and heard; and hold faſt, and repent. If therefore thou ſhalt not watch, I will come on thee as a Thief, and thou ſhalt not know what Hour I will come upon thee.

4 Thou haſt a few Names, even in Sardis, which have not defiled their Garments, and they ſhall walk with me in White; for they are worthy.

Here we have, 1. A heavy Challenge, *v.* 1. 2. A ſeaſonable Direction, *v.* 2, 3. And, 3. An encouraging Commendation of ſome of them.

I. There is a heavy Challenge, *v.* 1. *Thou haſt a Name that thou liveſt, and art dead.* The *Papiſts* tell us, they were guilty of ſome *deadly Sin*: And others make no Scruple to affirm they were arrant *Hypocrites*. As for the firſt, there being no ſuch Diſtinction of Sin in Scripture, as *venial* and *deadly*, it is impoſſible for any to ſolve a Difficulty thereby: As for the other, it appears great Raſhneſs to paſs ſuch heavy Sentence without better Grounds. We ſhall endeavour to eſtabliſh the Meaning of this Accuſation, from the Context: For, 1. We find it ſaid, there was *ſome Good* in them, tho' it was *weak*; and therefore Chriſt exhorts, *v.* 2. *Strengthen the Things that remain*: Where theſe remaining Things cannot be meant of the *Name* they had, for then the Senſe would be, Endeavour to have a *greater Name*; but it is meant of the *Vitals* and Power of Godlineſs, which was languid in them. It would be a great Solyciſm to ſay, A Man has no Faith, becauſe his Faith is weak. 2. This Deadneſs of theirs was rather a *Defect* than a *Privation*, and much leſs a *Negation*: *I have not found thy Works perfect* (Original, *full*, or *compleat*) *before God*: Where ſhe is accuſed, not as if ſhe had no Works, but only they were not ſo full as they ſhould have been: So that her Caſe was not a total or abſolute Deadneſs, but comparative and partial; and therefore, not much unlike to the Church of *Epheſus*. But, to underſtand it more fully, we would, 1. Conſider her Name. 2. What ſhe really was.

1. We would view this Name, *Thou haſt a Name to live*; which may be underſtood of the Opinion and Judgment of Charity other Churches had of them; and ſo the Senſe is, Thou haſt indeed a fair Character in the World, and art univerſally well ſpoke of: As was *Jeruſalem* of old, *Ezek.* xvi. 14. *Thy Renown went forth among the Heathen for thy Beauty, for it was perfect through my Comelineſs which I put upon thee, ſaith the Lord.* To be ſure, there were ſome Things appearing in her, which gave Occaſion to ſuch a favourable Character. And from the Silence of the Text, we may reaſonably preſume, 1. That they were not tainted with Error. 2. They had Purity of Worſhip. And, 3. Not broken in Morals; for there is not one Word, as to any of theſe, charged againſt her. And therefore, I think, they are out of it, who imagine this was a very *ſuperſtitious* Church, and fond of *Ceremonies*; for there can neither be Name nor Thing in them: Beſides, it was long after this, before theſe crept into the Church. Or, we may take *Name* in Oppoſition to *Truth*; but then, we muſt beware we do not oppoſe it to any Thing of Truth, but that the Appearance and Shew was more than what the Truth did warrant; and ſo it ſeems to ſay, they were too nice of their

Reputation in the World, and too remiſs about the Glory of God: And ſo the Word may be turned, Thou *holdeſt* or *ſticks by a Name* in the Sight of Men; which indeed ſays, they were Vain and Self-conceited, which is a very great Enemy to the Power of Godlineſs.

2. Their Caſe; *And art dead*, notwithſtanding the Value others put upon thee, and the great Pains thou art at to maintain that good Opinion. This Deadneſs, I ſhewed, is not to be taken in an abſolute Senſe; and ſo, I think, theſe two Things make up their Deadneſs; 1. They laboured under a great Defect of the Exerciſe of Religion: For we uſe to ſay of a Man that does not exerciſe his Faculties, He is dead, tho' there be really Life in him; as we find is ſaid of the Poſſeſſed Man, *Mark* ix. 26. *The Spirit rent him, and left him as One dead, inſomuch that many ſaid, He is dead.* So they had fallen from the Exerciſe of their Graces, they had turned lazy and unactive. 2. They were *dead*; that is, in a dying and decaying Condition, and ſo in Hazard of Death. The Apoſtle being often in Hazard of Death, expreſſeth himſelf to this Purpoſe, 1 *Cor.* xv. 30, 31. *Why ſtand we in Jeopardy every Hour? I proteſt by your Rejoicing, I die daily*: Which exactly anſwers to our Lord's Words in this Context, *Strengthen the Things ----which are ready to die.*

II. There is a ſeaſonable Direction, conſiſting of ſeveral Branches, enforced with rouzing Conſiderations threatned: Both theſe to excite them.

1. We have the *Directions* exactly fitted to their State; and theſe ſeem to be of two Sorts, One concerning their preſent Buſineſs, another Sort reſpects their paſt and preſent State. To each of theſe a proper Argument is added.

(1.) Their preſent Work is couched up in theſe two, 1. *Be ye watchful.* We had this before; only this Expreſſion ſeems to recommend a continued Exerciſe, as the Way to keep them from falling further into this dead State. 2. *Strengthen the Things that* (are weak, yet) *remain, that are ready to die:* Where is the Object of this Duty. Some underſtand this of Perſons, *i. e.* their Brethren, that are fallen into that ſpiritual Lethargy, according to many Exhortations, to this Purpoſe, in Scripture, *Gal.* v. 1. Whatever be in this, that which I conceive to be the Meaning of it is, Theſe Remains of Religion in them, theſe weak and decayed Graces, which were then ſo feeble, they were at the expiring. The Duty is, *Strengthen* or ſtabliſh them, *viz.* by Practice, as the Apoſtle exhorts, *Heb.* xii. 12. *Lift up the Hands which hang down, and the feeble Knees*; they are called to exerciſe both Legs and Arms. The Argument by which he preſſeth theſe Duties, is, *For I have not found thy Works perfect before God.* They had a good Shew in the Sight of Man, but Chriſt here diſcovers their Lameneſs. He does not here deſiderate a *Legal Perfection*, for that is impoſſible, *Prov.* xx. 9. *Who can ſay, I have made my Heart clean, I am pure from mine Iniquity?* But a Perfection which is *Evangelical*, that conſiſts in Sincerity, Exerciſe of commanded Duties, and perſevering therein; or (which may rather be the Meaning of it here) a cloſs Performance of their ſeveral Duties: So we find this ſame Word to ſignify in Scripture, *Acts* xiv. 16. *They had been recommended to the Grace of God, for the Work which they fulfilled, i. e.* performed. And, *Rom.* xiii. 8. *He that loveth another, hath fulfilled the Law.* This is further to aſſure them, God will have no Regard to the good Opinion Men have of them; for they may be deceived, but God cannot.

(2.) The next Sett of Directions concern their paſt and preſent State, *v.* 3. in theſe Particulars, 1. *Remember therefore how thou haſt received, and heard.* Where they are not ſo much accuſed for forgetting the *Things* which they heard, as they had forgotten the *Entertainment* they had given the Goſpel; for then they received it with Satisfaction, heard it with Care, and were zealous about what was recommended. 2. *Hold faſt:* The ſame with what we had above, *Chap.* ii. *v.* 13. 3. *Repent*, Chap. ii. 5.

The Motive by which he preſſeth, not only theſe, but the former two, is in the reſt of the Verſe. That this is deſigned to enforce them all, is evident; becauſe he reſumes the firſt Direction, thereby giving them to know, the whole is included, *If therefore thou ſhalt not watch*, &c. We had that Part, *I will come*, Chap. ii. 5. But we have ſomething here which accents this Threatning: As, 1. He told the other Churches what they had to fear in caſe of Impenitence, he'd unchurch them; but here he reſerves to himſelf how he will treat this Church: As One ſays, Their Doom is blank, and they could not know how terrible it would be. 2. There is a Change of the Conſtruction: Before it is only ſaid, *I will come unto thee*; but here it is ſaid, *I will come upon thee*, ἥξω ἐπί σε, i. e. I will fall upon thee. 3. He would diſmantle them of all they valued; for he ſays, *I will come upon thee like a Thief.* This is with Alluſion to ſecret Enemies, who aſſault privily, and both rob and ſlay. 4. It would be a moſt ſurprizing Stroke: He told the other Churches, He would come quickly; but here he tells, *Thou ſhalt not know the Hour I will come upon thee.*

III. There

III. There is an encouraging Commendation of ſome of them, *v.* 4. followed with a gracious Promiſe.

1. There is a *Commendation* of *ſome*: As culpable as this Church was, they were not all of a Piece; and theſe, tho' not many, are not to be neglected by him who has the *Seven Spirits of God*. Where we have, 1. The Perſons. 2. The Praiſe our Lord beſtows on them.

(1.) The Perſons, *A few Names*: Name and Perſon are the ſame often in Scripture, *Acts* iv. 12. *Rev.* ix. 13. This Church had all a great Name, yet only a few deſerved it; in a Multitude of Profeſſors, but a few honeſt-hearted; yet, for their Sake, God is merciful to the Community. And ſo many a Time we may ſay with the Prophet, *Iſa.* i. 9. *Except the Lord of Hoſts had left unto us a very ſmall Remnant, we ſhould have been as* Sodom, *and we ſhould have been like unto* Gomorrah. Again, thoſe few are deſigned from the Place of their Reſidence, *even in* Sardis: This καὶ is very ſignificative here, for it ſhews the general Defection of this Church, that it was a Wonder one ſhould be found free of this ſpiritual Malady. And it is no leſs a Commendation of this *few*, that, *even in* Sardis, they had kept their Integrity; becauſe, when Deadneſs invades a Church, it is like the Diſeaſe called *Torpor*, whatever Member it begins at, it commonly makes its Way through the whole Body. Yet here, in this upſitten and lazy Church, there are found a few not affected with this ſpiritual Torpor.

(2.) Their Praiſe and Commendation, which, no doubt, is upon the Score of their Honeſty, *Which have not defiled their Garments.* Some tell us, This *Metaphorical* Expreſſion alludes to the ancient Cuſtom at *Baptiſm*, when the Perſons who were to take on them the *Vows* of God, were arrayed in White, as a Symbol of that holy Profeſſion they were then to engage in: And that they uſed to ſay of any that lived unworthy of their baptiſmal Engagements, They had defiled their Garments, *i. e.* foul'd them with Sin. Others again, by this, mean the Conſcience; and becauſe theſe who ſin do really defile their Conſciences, therefore theſe who guard againſt Sin, are ſaid not to defile their Garments; for they ſay, the *Conſcience* is the Garment of the Soul: Theſe Thoughts are very good, and not far from the Truth; but we would a little conſider the *Metaphor*, and the Scripture-Uſe of it. By a *Garment* we underſtand that which we put on, and ſo is not natural to us; it has two Uſes, one for *Preſervation*, and the other for *Ornament*. Now we have this in Scripture applied to ſeveral Things; as for the whole Bulk of Religion, *Deſiring to be clothed with our Houſe from Heaven*, 2 Cor. v 2, 3. Sometimes it is applied to ſome particular Piece of Godlineſs; as to that of Thankſgiving, *The Garment of Praiſe*, Iſa. lxi. 3. To Humility, *And be ye clothed with Humility*, 2 Pet. v. 5. At other Times it is applied to Converſion or Regeneration, *And have put on the new Man*, Col. iii. 10. But, from all theſe, it does not appear to which of them it is to be applied in this Place: I doubt not but it may have an Eye to all of them, and alſo to ſome other Things of the like Nature; But, for the immediate Scope, I ſhould think it moſt agreeable to the Air of the Context, that by Garment be underſtood a *Good Name*, which the far greater Part of this Church did not live up to; and therefore, while they carried diſagreeably, they might be ſaid to defile their Garments by their Deadneſs; for the very Touch of the Dead was a *Ceremonial* Uncleanneſs, and much more muſt their dead State be a Moral Pollution. In this Senſe, I think, we have it elſewhere, *The Smell of thy Garments is like the Smell of Lebanon*, Song iv. 11. And a Converſation becoming the Goſpel, is called, An *Adorning thereof*.

2. The *Promiſe*, together with the Ground of it, in the Cloſe of the Verſe.

(1.) The Promiſe is, *They ſhall walk with me in White*; originally, *Whites*. In this Promiſe is much contained, which we only glance at; 1. Their Exerciſe, They *ſhall walk*; which has in it Life and Liberty, and Continuation of both. It ſeems to point at a Condition oppoſite to that of others, who will be pent up in Priſons of everlaſting Darkneſs, whence they cannot move; and ſeems to be of Affinity with that Promiſe, *If thou wilt walk in my Ways, and keep my Charge, then thou ſhalt judge my Houſe, and ſhalt alſo keep my Courts, and I will give thee Places to walk among them that ſtand by*, Zech. iii. 7. 2. They ſhall walk *with me*, i. e. with Chriſt; which ſhews they ſhould have the ſame Life with him, be in the ſame Place with him, and have conſtant and uninterrupted Communion with him. There ſhall be, *q. d.* a perfect Reconciliation and Intimacy between *me* and *them*: So the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *If Children, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Chriſt; if ſo be that we ſuffer with him, that we may be alſo glorified together*, Rom. viii. 17. 3. They ſhall walk with me *in Whites*. This ſhews their Aſſimulation to Chriſt: For it is ſaid, when Chriſt was transfigured, *Mat.* xvii. 2. *Mark* ix. 3. *His Raiment was white as Light, yea exceeding white as Snow, ſo as no Fuller on Earth can white them.*

them. This is a Specimen of the glorious Appearance the Bleſſed above have: Which we have further repreſented by other Scripture-Similitudes, *The Righteous ſhall ſhine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*: And, *We know we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* But it is remarked amongſt the *Greeks*, that an Adjective, abſolutely read, has always more Things than one or two in it, when it is in the plural Number; and therefore, they think, it points out theſe Things, 1. Holineſs; *Behold, I have cauſed thine Iniquity to paſs from thee, and I will clothe thee with Change of Raiment*, Zech. iii. 4. 2. Peace, whereof we find white Robes an Emblem, *Rev.* vii. 9. *They had white Robes, and Palms in their Hands.* 3. Joy: So *Solomon* makes White an Emblem of it, *Rejoice* (be white) *O young Man, in the Days of thy Youth*, Eccleſ. ix. 11 4. Triumph: So the Angel, who had rolled away the Stone from Chriſt's Sepulchre, made ſuch an Appearance; and it is ſaid, *Mat.* xxviii. 3. *His Countenance was like Lightning, and his Raiment white as Snow.* 5. Glory; as in the Accounts of the Transfiguration, before. So that this does to the Life portray to us the glorious Condition of theſe after this Life, who keep their Garments undefiled in this, and may be partially fulfilled in Time.

(2.) We have the Ground of this; *For they are worthy.* Here the *Papiſts* grip hard, to ſupport their beloved Principle of the Merits of good Works, which is a moſt gainful One to them; yet, they ſhould conſider, Chriſt is not here ſpeaking of the *Worthineſs* of Works, but of Perſons, which at once deſtroys all they have to advance. Others again talk of a comparative Worthineſs, that theſe were more worthy than the reſt of the Church; and ground this on that, *The righteous Man is more excellent than his Neighbour*, Prov. xii. 26. To which it may be anſwered, That a Compariſon may not be inſtitute where there is no Compariſon, at leaſt in the ſame Kind; which I take to be the Meaning of the Place adduced, where the State of the Compariſon is to run betwixt the temporal Excellency of a wicked Man, and the ſpiritual Excellency of a godly Man; and ſo it is not a Compariſon of the ſame Kind. But here it is not ſaid, they are more worthy, but ſimply and abſolutely, they are worthy; which ſays, the reſt were unworthy: But the Scripture directs us to a more eaſy Method of unriddling this, which is, to underſtand *Meetneſs* by Worth; and ſo it ſignifies no more but a Diſpoſition or neceſſary Qualification in one Thing, fitting it for another: So we read of *Works meet for Repentance*, Mat. iii. 8. It cannot be rendred deſerving of Repentance, yet it is the ſame Word. And juſt ſo, *Let your Converſation be ſuch as becometh the Goſpel*, Philip i. 27. But we read of another Worthineſs in Scripture, which may help up with the former, *i. e.* a borrowed Worthineſs; for only Chriſt has an *intrinſick* one, and all others are in him lookt upon as worthy, while, in the mean Time, it is only *extrinſick*: *Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be counted worthy to eſcape all theſe Things which ſhall come to paſs*, Luke xxi. 36. And ſo, 2 *Theſſ.* i. 11. *We pray our God would count you worthy of his Calling.* And yet this will not conclude, but the reſt, tho' unworthy, might recover, if they obſerved the Directions given, which, to be ſure, were fitted to the End.

5 He that overcometh, the ſame ſhall be clothed in white Raiment; and I will not blot out his Name out of the Book of Life, but I will confeſs his Name before my Father, and before his Angels.

6 He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches.

In this Concluſion, we have only to notice three gracious Promiſes; the firſt we have ſpoke of in the laſt Verſe; and ſo there remains that we ſpeak concerning the other two, the firſt has the moſt Difficulty.

I. The firſt Promiſe comes under our Conſideration, we have in theſe Words, *I will not blot out his Name out of the Book of Life.* Where the Text, which is indeed very much perplexed by Expoſitors of different Views, does neceſſarily require we ſpeak a little, 1. To the Book of Life. 2. To open up a little the Nature of being written in this Book. 3. As to the Meaning of blotting out thereof. Nor can I promiſe to ſatisfy all in theſe Things.

1. We read here of the Book, called *the Book of Life.* Now a *Book* is not to be aſcribed to God in a *proper*, but a *metaphorical* Senſe; for God has a more exact Knowledge of all Things without a Book, than is poſſible for any Man to have when he keeps the moſt accurate Diary. And ſo, by this Book we are to underſtand the *Mind of God*, in which he has the certain Knowledge of all Things, and particularly of thoſe Perſons that belong to himſelf; *The Lord knoweth them that are his*, 2 Tim. ii. 19. Which Knowledge is not uncertain or variable, like the Knowledge in Man, which may

may be clouded with Forgetfulneſs, for this is ſtill freſh and green. We have an Account of *many Books* aſcribed to God in Scripture, 1. A *Book of Deliverance*, Dan. xii. 1. *Every One ſhall be delivered at that Time, even all that ſhall be found written in the Book.* Which all acknowledge has ſome further View than the Deliverance of the *Jews* from the *Babyloniſh* Captivity; And that it reſpects the Called according to God's *Purpoſe*, under the Goſpel-diſpenſation: And it is thought to be the ſame with that our Lord ſpeaks of, when he bids his Diſciples *Rejoice that their Names were written in Heaven*, Luke x. 20. this ſeems plainly to be an eternal Record. 2. We read, that God had ordered a *Book of Nativity*, that every one ſhould know what Tribe they belonged to, that they might be able to give an Account of their lineal Deſcent from the Patriarchs: Out of this Book we find Names might be blotted; and ſo it is ſaid of the falſe Prophets, *Ezek.* xiii. 9. *Neither ſhall they be written in the Writing of the Houſe of Iſrael.* They were to be ſcored off, and their Memory buried in perpetual Oblivion, becauſe they (and there's no Doubt) by this Practice, had forfeited a Right to all the Privileges of the Lord's People. 3. We have the Book of the *Firſt-born of* Iſrael, which *Moſes* was commanded to collect, and ſanctify to God, in lieu of the Firſt-born of the *Egyptians*, which were ſlain in the Paſſover-Night: And that this had a Myſtical Senſe, is very plain from what the Apoſtle ſays, *The General Aſſembly and Church of the Firſt-born which are written in Heaven*, Heb. xii. 23. 4. The Book of *God's Providence*, where are contained all the Steps of his Management in the Government of the World. In this, the Pſalmiſt ſays, *Pſal.* cxxxix. 16. *His Members were written.* This alſo is a Book of Predeſtination. 5. We have the *Lamb's Book of Life*, Rev. xiii. 8. *Names written in the Book of Life of the Lamb.* And, 6. We read of the Book of Life in this Text, and in *Philip.* iv. 3. and other Places. It is evident, all theſe Books above-mentioned, as alſo the *Book of Judgment*, of which we read afterwards, *Rev.* xvii. 8. are all done by the Finger of God, or elſe emblematical thereof, unleſs we make ſome Difficulty about *Ezekiel's* Book of Nativity; which many think, tho' it was a Book of God's ordering, yet had nothing in it that reſpected his eternal Determinations. As for the reſt, it is not poſſible to make Senſe of them, and not allow the *predeterminating* Counſel of God ſhining in them. And here, when it contains Events after Time, it is not to be doubted; nor will that pitiful Shift take Place, that they ſhould not be cancelled out of the publick Regiſters of the Congregations, which, no Doubt, contained the Names of all in the Church, as well as this Handful.

It remains then, that this *Book of Life* is nothing elſe but the Book of Divine Predeſtination, concerning the eternal Happineſs of his Elect; of this Book it is ſaid, *Rev.* xx. 15. *Whoſoever was not written in the Book of Life, was caſt into the Lake of Fire.* So that of Neceſſity this Book muſt be written from all Eternity, becauſe the Ground of it is the eternal Decree. It is called the *Book of Life*, becauſe all regiſtrate there are deſigned for everlaſting Life: And *the Book of the Lamb*, becauſe all theſe Perſons are conſigned over into Chriſt's Hand, as their *Redeemer*, which he will manage ſo as at the Cloſe he may ſay, *John* xvii. *Of all thou haſt given me, I have loſt none.*

2. We are to ſpeak a Word of the Writing of Names in this Book; for, tho' we have no Mention of *Writing* in the Text, yet *Blotting out* neceſſarily ſuppoſes it. And, to be ſure, *Writing* is as improperly aſcribed to God, as a *Book*: For all we are to mean by God's Writing is, his Determination; and ſo the Apoſtle expreſſeth it, *You hath he choſen from the Beginning to Salvation, through Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth*, 2 Theſſ. ii. 13. Yet, in ſome Senſe, Names may be ſaid to be written in this Book, either when People ſolemnly dedicate and devote themſelves to God; as we read, Some *ſhall ſubſcribe with his Hand unto the Lord, and ſirname himſelf by the Name of* Iſrael, *Iſa.* xliv. 5. For theſe perſwade themſelves, and ſome upon good Ground too, that they are the Lord's; or by others in the Judgment of Charity. In this Senſe, it may be thought the Apoſtle ſpeaks of *Clemens* and others, when he ſays, *Philip.* iv. 3. *Their Names are written in the Book of Life.*

3. We are to ſpeak a little of the *Blotting out of this Book*; and what is ſaid of the Writing, does much to clear that: For, as to the charitable Opinion of others, many may be ſaid to be blotted out; but, the Truth is, they were never written, and it was a Miſtake in the Judger: So the Apoſtle tells us of ſome that *went out from us*, 1 John ii. 19. and gives the Reaſon, *Becauſe they were not of us.* In this Senſe it is, that People are ſaid to make *Shipwreck of the Faith*; i. e. they throw off the Maſk, and ſhew they never had Faith. And, as to a Perſon's Perſwaſion his *Name is written in the Book of Life*, it may have been a Miſtake from the Beginning; for a great many preſume without Ground, which can never be Aſſurance. Others again may fear their Names are blotted out, while there is no ſuch Thing, as *David* ſaid, *I am caſt off.* But then, as to God's blotting out, we have his

Word for it, *I will not blot out his Name*: Tho' the World ſhould loſe its favourable Opi- of him, yea, tho' he ſhould fall from his own well-grounded Aſſurance, yet Chriſt will not blot him out: *No Man can come unto me, except the Father which hath ſent me draw him*; *and I will raiſe him up at the laſt Day*, John vi. 44. And indeed, there can be no *blotting out* of this Book, elſe it would ceaſe to be the *Book of Life*, if any that die eternally ſhould be written there. Beſides, *blotting out*, in a proper Senſe, ſuppoſes neceſſarily either *Ignorance* or a *Miſtake*; and ſeeing none of theſe can have Place in God, it plainly follows there can be no *Blotting out*.

Object. There ſeems however a Poſſibility of blotting out of this Book, which is implied in this Text; for all that is ſaid, and further expreſſed in *Moſes*'s Demand, *Exod.* xxxii. 32. *Yet now if thou wilt forgive their Sin*; *if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy Book which thou haſt written.* Nor can it be ſuppoſed *Moſes* would deſire an Impoſſibility from God.

Anſwer. It is not neceſſary we ſhould underſtand this Book of *Predeſtination*; yea, a narrow View of the Place ſhews we can mean no ſuch Thing: For the Lord had ſaid, *v.* 10. *Let me alone, that my Wrath may wax hot againſt them, that I may conſume them*; *and I will make of thee a great Nation. And* Moſes *beſought the Lord*, &c. *q. d.* I ſtand not upon my own Name; I am ſo far from being deſirous to be Head of a greater Nation than this, that, rather than thy Name ſhould ſuffer, I care not to be noticed as the Leader of this Nation, nor as the meaneſt Member thereof: Blot me out of the Book that thou haſt written as the Record of the People of *Iſrael*, i. e. Let me be reckoned no more for an *Iſraelite*; eſpecially, let me not have a *glorious* and *honourable* Name in *Iſrael*, as the Leader of the *Lord's People*; let not my Name ſtand upon that Record. We have Ground from Scripture to interprete this of ſuch Records, *It ſhall come to paſs, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jeruſalem, ſhall be called holy, even every one that is written among the Living* [to Life] *in* Jeruſalem, *Iſa.* iv. 3. i. e. ſuch whom God was to notice and honour. So that there is no Force in this Objection.

II. The next Promiſe, *But I will confeſs his Name before my Father, and before his Angels.* The *Papiſts*, who, like *Elymas*, never ceaſe to *pervert the right Ways of the Lord*, build their Worſhipping of Angels upon this among other Texts of Scripture, and ſay, That Chriſt is to plead their Cauſe before the *Father*, and before *them*; while there is nothing like this in the Text, which has neither leſs nor more in it than this, that Chriſt, at the laſt Judgment, would own and acknowledge before that auguſt Aſſembly theſe few Perſons in *Sardis*: This he did promiſe to all Believers, when in the Fleſh, *Mat.* x. 32. *He that confeſſeth me before Men, him will I confeſs before my Father.* And again, *Luke* xii. 8. *Him will I confeſs before the holy Angels.* Now theſe excellent Ones of the Earth are rarely mentioned by the World, but in Deriſion: But then will Chriſt own them, to the eternal Confuſion of their Enemies.

The Periodiſts are much ſtraitned in the Application of this Epiſtle; thoſe who made it commence from the Beginning of the tenth Century, make it end in the Year 1273, which was indeed the darkeſt Period of *Popery*, and in that Time the *Mahometan* Principles made no ſmall Progreſs; yet, how is it poſſible to reconcile the Character of this Church to the then State of Chriſtianity? ſeeing there was ſcarce a Name in the World given to any Church, for I never thought the *Popiſh* Church could deſerve the Name of a Chriſtian Church. Others carry it down to the *Reformation*; but theſe who ſtate the Beginning of this Period at the Reformation, are yet more perplexed; but few of them are ſo forward as determine its Period, except in very general Terms. Some indeed confine it to the Reformation in *Germany*, in which Time, they own, many did contend for the Truths of Chriſt: But, they ſay, It was more from a Conviction of the *Popiſh* Errors, than any true Love to the Faith of Chriſt; and many other Things ſpeak they petulantly of theſe great Men, which is an unworthy Treatment of theſe glorious Inſtruments God raiſed up at that Time, to diſcover the Vileneſs of *Popery* in the Glaſs of the Scripture: Nor ſhould any be ſo fond of any Notion, as break through all Rules of Charity and Civility to ſupport the ſame.

EPISTLE VI.

7 And to the Angel of the Church in Philadelphia write, Theſe Things ſaith he that is Holy, he that is True, he that hath the Key of David,

David, he that openeth and no Man ſhutteth, and ſhutteth and no Man openeth.

THE City where this Church had her Seat, is called *Philadelphia*, a ſmall City to the Eaſtward of *Sardis*, at the Foot of Mount *Imolus* alſo. It was built by *Attalus Philadelphus*, a King, and had its Name from him. It is much affected with Earthquakes and Lightning; ſo that no Trees, except Vines, are to be found about it: Otherwiſe the Soil is moſt fruitful. There are a good Number of Chriſtians there to this Day, where they poſſeſs four Churches by the Permiſſion of the *Turks*. Some ſay, The Danger of Living there makes the *Turks* more indifferent about it.

The Deſignations Chriſt takes to himſelf in this Epiſtle, are theſe three, 1. *The Holy*; Which we have not expreſſed in the *firſt Chapter*, but neceſſarily implied in moſt of theſe Emblems by which he repreſents himſelf: But he is deſigned ſo often in Scripture, *The holy One*, Acts iii. 14. and he is ſo in his Divine Nature, his ſpotleſs Conception, his blameleſs Life. It may, in a particular Manner, point at his Separation to the Work of a Mediator; and ſo he is ſaid to *be ſanctified and ſent into the World*, John x. 36. and his being the Author of Holineſs, wherever it is found. 2. *The True*. He is called *the Truth*, John xiv. 6. He is ſo in his perfect Natures, in all his Promiſes and Threatnings, and in a particular Manner as he is the Accompliſhment of all the Types and Shadows under the Law. It may alſo be the ſame in Subſtance with that Character, *Chap.* i. 5. *The faithful Witneſs*. 3. *He that hath the Key of David*: The Meaning whereof we have, *Chap.* i. partly, *v.* 5. where he is deſigned *The Prince of the Kings of the Earth*. And partly, *v.* 18. where he is ſaid to have *the Keys of Hell and Death*. This exhibites the Fulneſs of his Power, and that it is lodged in him allenarly. The following two Clauſes ſhew the Exerciſe of this Power: The one his irreſiſtable opening of a Door to his Goſpel, as in the next Verſe, *He that openeth, and no Man ſhutteth*. The other declares his Power of excluding, *He ſhutteth, and no Man openeth*. But both theſe, tho' they ſeem immediately to reſpect the Propagation of the *Goſpel*, that he can ſend it where he pleaſeth, and it ſhall not be in the Power of any to oppoſe and reſtrain it, nor ſhall any be able to carry it without him; Yet it may alſo reſpect his making the Exerciſe of Diſcipline in the Church, either effectual, or not: Yet does not this exclude, but rather recommends the *Miniſterial* Uſe of the *Keys*. This is moſt ſuitable to the Caſe of this poor hampered Church, which will caſt up as we go through the Letter itſelf.

8 I know thy Works: Behold, I have ſet before thee an open Door, and no Man can ſhut it: For thou haſt a little Strength, and haſt kept my Word, and haſt not denied my Name.

9 Behold, I will make them of the Synagogue of Satan, which ſay they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worſhip before thy Feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

10 Becauſe thou haſt kept the Word of my Patience, I alſo will keep thee from the Hour of Temptation, which ſhall come upon all the World, to try them that dwell on the Earth.

11 Behold, I come quickly: Hold faſt that which thou haſt, that no Man take thy Crown.

This is truly a Love-letter, and is full of gracious Manifeſtations. I ſhall take them up in four Generals, according to the four Verſes.

I. He aſſures them of a notable *Privilege*, that ſhould be comfortable to them under their preſent Diſtreſs; and adds, as the Reaſon thereof, a notable *Conſolation* taken from their Caſe.

1. We have the Privilege, *Behold, I have ſet before thee an open Door, and none can ſhut it*. There are ſeveral Senſes of this *Metaphor*, all of them worthy of recording.

(1.) Some, by this *open Door*, mean free Acceſs to the Goſpel, *i. e. To give it free Courſe, that it may be glorified*: Which is very agreeable to the Apoſtle's Words, 1 *Cor.* xvi. 9. *A great Door, and effectual, was opened to me*. And again, he ſays, 2 *Cor.* ii. 12. *When I came to* Troas, *to preach Chriſt, and a Door was opened unto me of the Lord*. The Opening of this Door, is Chriſt's Work, by that *Key* he received as *Mediator*; which is nothing other than the *Spirit* working powerfully and inſuperably

rably, on Miniſters, by *opening a Door of Utterance, to ſpeak the Myſtery of Chriſt*, Col. iv. 3. and on the People, by giving a Door of Entrance, opening their Hearts, as he did *the Heart of* Lydia, *to attend to the Things that are ſpoken*, Acts xvii. 14. which *Door* it ſhould not be in the Power of Enemies to *ſhut*: Which they take to be in Subſtance, what was of old promiſed to the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *They ſhall fight againſt thee, but they ſhall not prevail againſt thee: For I am with thee, ſaith the Lord, to deliver thee*, Jer. i. 19.

(2.) Others underſtand this of *opening their Minds* to the compleat Underſtanding of the *Scriptures*; which ſeems not to differ much from the other, and is only an Enlargement of that Privilege, that they were to have the Goſpel in Purity, as well as Plenty, and with great Power.

(3.) Others underſtand this of their *Deliverance* from a State of Nature, and introducing them in the *Kingdom* of Chriſt; becauſe it was a Part of Chriſt's Commiſſion, *To open the Priſon-Doors to them that are bound*, Iſa. lxi. 1. This I cannot go in with, becauſe we are ſure a great many were converted already, from the ſeveral Paſſages of this Epiſtle.

(4.) Another Senſe given of this is, That they were to have an open Door of *Eſcape* from their Troubles; for no Doubt they were in Difficulties: And indeed this may paſs as a Part of the Senſe, but not the whole, nay, nor the greateſt Part.

(5.) Becauſe all theſe Meanings appear not expreſſive enough of all that is contained in the *Metaphor*, where we read of a *Key*, and a *Door*: Both which ſeem to ſuppoſe a *Houſe*, or a *City*; and the uſing of the Key in opening of the Door, ſeems plainly to tell us of Acceſs. Now, a Houſe, and a City, while they are ſpoken of, with reſpect to God, ſignify the ſame Thing. This Entrance adminiſtrate in Time, does repreſent to us *free Acceſs* to God, in the Exerciſe of all Goſpel-graces and Goſpel-duties; which we have in a Prophetick Strain, in theſe Words, *Iſa.* lvi. 5. *Unto them will I give in mine Houſe, and within my Walls, a Place, and a Name better than of Sons and of Daughters*: And in a Goſpel Stile we have it, *Eph.* ii. 13, &c. *Ye who were ſometime far off, are brought nigh by the Blood of Chriſt*, &c. And that this is not foreign from the Scope of the Place, is evident from *v.* 12. where we read both of a Temple, and a City: And, to enhanſe this Mercy the more, we have two Additions, one from the Author, *I have ſet it*, or, I have given it, *i. e.* Chriſt, who has Right to diſpoſe of this Door, and Strength to defend it; and therefore it is added in the next Place, which flows from this, *And no Man can ſhut it*: Where there is a plain Inſinuation, that ſome, yea many, would endeavour to mar their Acceſs; But he is ſtronger than all, and therefore he ſays, *John* x. 28. *Neither ſhall any Man pluck them out of my Hand.* And *Peter* tells us, 1 *Pet.* i. 5. *We are kept by the mighty Power of God unto Salvation.*

2. We have a notable Conſolation taken from their Caſe, in three Branches: Where we are not to think they had theſe Things in, or from themſelves; but God commends *Grace* where he finds it, and rewards Grace with Grace. 1. *Thou haſt a little Strength*; or, as it ſhould be rendered, *Thou haſt little Strength.* Some take this to be meant of their Graces, that they were weak in Faith, &c. and ſo were like the Church of *Sardis*: But then, this would be culpable in them, as well as the other. Beſides, the other two ſeem to confute this; for *they kept his Word*, and, in ſpight of all Endeavours, adhered *to Chriſt's Name*; which is no Sign of weak Grace. Others again imagine this ſpoke to their *Miniſters*; and ſo it accuſes them of Weakneſs and Inability for their Works: But, ſhould we allow this, it is no ſmall Commendation of them, that notwithſtanding of their Weakneſs, they were ſo conſtant. But I ſhewed before, theſe Epiſtles are directed to all the Members of the Church, as well as Miniſters: This little Strength then ſeems to reſpect their temporal Condition; and ſo they were more a-kin to the Church of *Smyrna*, than any of the reſt: But with this Addition, as their Circumſtances in the World might be narrow enough, ſo their Number is but few; and ſo this is a Diſcovery of the Compaſſion of Chriſt to them, and a Commendation, that their *Poverty* was no Enemy to their *Honeſty*. 2. Their Stedfaſtneſs in the Faith, *And haſt kept my Word.* 3. Their Perſeverance in that Exerciſe, *And haſt not denied my Faith.* Of both which, *Chap.* ii. *v.* 13.

II. The next encouraging Manifeſtation is, A *Promiſe* concerning their worſt Enemies, *v.* 9. where we have them deſcribed, *Theſe of the Synagogue of Satan, who ſay they are* Jews, *and are not, but lie.* Theſe were alſo bitter Enemies to the honeſt Church of *Smyrna*, Chap. ii. 9. where I explained and vindicate the Senſe of this Clauſe. It remains then we conſider the Promiſe concerning them, *I will make* (or rather, *I give, and I will make*) *them to come and worſhip before thy Feet, and to know that I have loved thee.* This Promiſe, introduced with two *Beholds*, and as many active

Verbs

Verbs, *I give, I make,* does certainly ſay, There is more than ordinary comprehended therein: Nor indeed has it been in the Power of any I have met with, to reſiſt the plain Senſe of this, which is a Promiſe of the Converſion of their greateſt Enemies; and ſo it is the Verification of that general Promiſe, *Prov.* xvi. 7. *When a Man's Ways pleaſe the Lord, he will make even his Enemies to be at Peace with him.* Nor is this the only Place of Scripture where ſuch a Promiſe is made; for, long ſince, we have the like, *Iſa.* lx. 14. *The Sons alſo of them that afflicted thee, ſhall come bending unto thee; and they that deſpiſe thee, ſhall bow at the Soles of thy Feet; and they ſhall call thee the City of the Lord, the Holy One of* Iſrael: Than which, nothing could be a plainer Diſcovery that Chriſt had the *Key of David*; Nor could any Uſe of that Key be more acceptable to that upright Goſpel-ſociety.

III. Hitherto our Lord had ſpoken very compaſſionately to this Church, and promiſed their greateſt Enemies ſhould be their faſteſt Friends: But now he comes, in a diſtinguiſhing Manner, both to notice and reward their Patience; Where he, *1ſt,* Commends it, *Thou haſt kept the Word of my Patience.* It appears a Matter of little Moment, whether, by *the Word of Patience,* we underſtand the *Exerciſe* of Patience after Chriſt's Example and Command, or the whole *Word* of the Goſpel, as we find the *Croſs* put for the Goſpel, 1 *Cor.* i. 18. *The Preaching of the Croſs---- is to them that are ſaved, the Power of God*: Becauſe, if *Patience* be in earneſt, there will be *Faith, Love,* and in ſhort *all* the *Graces.* *2dly,* We have a Reward promiſed to this their Patience, *I will keep thee from the Hour of Tentation.* This is certainly a moſt diſtinguiſhing Promiſe; yea, it is what no particular Perſon or Church ſhould lay Claim to, but upon the ſureſt Grounds. We meet with no ſuch Promiſe to the other Churches. The Senſe of it is plainly this, When all other Churches ſhall be ſhaken with the Wind of *Temptation,* you ſhall eſcape, and none of it ſhall reach you. But notice it, a little further to commend the *Goodneſs* of Chriſt ſhining therein, 1. The Univerſality of this Plague, *It was to come upon all the World,* i. e. all the *Roman Empire,* which at that Time commonly went under this Deſignation; and indeed there was little more of the World known, but what had declared themſelves *Vaſſals* of the Empire. 2. The Time of it was ſet, *The Hour.* It is beyond all Debate, that *Hour* ſignifies often a Time or Seaſon in general, without any Limitation of the Shortneſs thereof. The Church of *Smyrna* had no ſuch Promiſe, tho' ſhe had what was next to it, a Premonition and a Warning it was coming; but not one Word of this to any of the other five Churches. The great Queſtion here is, What is that Temptation here ſpoke of? I ſee not how we can pitch upon any other than that ten Years Perſecution under *Trajan,* which we ſpoke of before on *Chap.* ii. *v.* 10. and it would appear, this was the only Church, at leaſt of the Seven, that did not ſmart under that Rod. It would be in vain, after this Promiſe, to enquire why this Church did eſcape more than the reſt: Some give a natural Cauſe, *viz.* The frequent Concuſſions of the Earth made the Emperor's Inſtruments of Cruelty afraid to venture themſelves in that Country, leſt they had been ſlain themſelves, before they could kill others. Our Text gives a better and ſurer: And, had it not been his reſtraining Power, can we think they would have ſuffered whole *ten Years* to paſs, and they never enquire about the Church of *Philadelphia*? But ſhe was ſafe under the Shadow of the moſt High. 3. The Deſign of this Perſecution, *To try them that dwell upon the Earth,* or rather to tempt them, as *Chap.* ii. *v.* 10. for it is the ſame Word, and probably it is the ſame Perſecution.

IV. Conſolation is a Promiſe backt with a Duty. 1. The Promiſe, which I explained before, *Chap.* ii. 5, 16. yet, I am humbly of the Mind, we are not to take it in the ſame Senſe here, as in the other two Texts: And my Reaſon is, In both theſe Places it is ſubjoined to Threatnings, and therefore muſt be a wrathful Coming; but here it is ſubjoined to conſolatory Promiſes, without the Mixture of one Word of a Threatning. And it would read ill, after all theſe Promiſes, to add, I will come in Anger and Vengeance quickly. Notwithſtanding, ſome very Learned Authors incline to underſtand this his Coming, of his Coming to Judgment; but not one Word of Reaſon to fortify it, and ſo we may be at as little Pains to turn it off. That which occurs to me to be the Senſe thereof, is to be fetched from that Part of the Deſcription of Chriſt, *He that hath the Key of David,* &c. and that Promiſe, *v.* 9. *I will make thine Enemies come and worſhip before thee,* &c. and then adding this, *Behold, I come quickly*: The Senſe is both plain and eaſy, *q. d.* I will come quickly with my Keys, and adminiſtrate abundant Acceſs to you, and to not a few of your preſent Enemies alſo. 2. The Duty, ſupported with a Motive: The Duty is, *Hold faſt that which thou haſt,* vide *Chap.* ii. *v.* 25. only we are to have reſpect to the Attainments of this Church, as ſomewhat different from the Church of *Thyatira.* The Motive is in Form of an Exhortation, *Let no Man take thy Crown.* Theſe who underſtand Chriſt's Coming to Judgment

by the Promiſe, by this mean the *Crown of Glory*: But, even allowing our Lord to be there ſpeaking of his laſt Coming, that will not follow to be the Senſe of this; for he is not ſpeaking of a *Crown* they were *after* to receive, but a *Crown* they had received *already*: And that can be nothing elſe but their own Honeſty and Integrity, honoured with the moſt diſtinguiſhing Marks of Chriſt's Love and Mercy. It has alſo a Caution in it, that they were in Hazard, and ſo much the more that he had ſent them this Letter; for their own treacherous Heart might join Iſſue with Satan, and turn their Wine of Conſolation into the Waters of Affliction. Follows the Concluſion.

12 Him that overcometh, will I make a Pillar in the Temple of my God, and he ſhall go no more out: And I will write upon him the Name of my God, and the Name of the City of my God, *which is* New Jeruſalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from my God: And *I will write upon him* my New Name.

13 He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches.

In this Concluſion we have a complex Promiſe, conſiſting of five ſeveral Branches, which we are to conſider in Order, after I have premiſed this General, That all theſe Promiſes that made up theſe Epiſtles, do point out to us the higheſt Attainments of Grace; and ſomething in them ſeems to point at the Felicity of an After-ſtate, tho' it cannot be refuſed, but that at leaſt in Part, and no inconſiderable Portion of them, may and will fall to the Share of Believers on this Side of Heaven; and ſome of them, we will find, are to have the whole of their Accompliſhment here. But we conſider them particularly.

1*ſt* Promiſe is, *I will make him a Pillar in the Temple of my God.* Some think this refers to the *Roman* Cuſtoms, of erecting *Pillars* to the Honour of their great *Heroes*; but this will not meet: Beſides, I nowhere find the *Spirit of God* is beholden to Heathen Cuſtoms for Emblems. As little can this reſpect the *Pillars* built by *Herod*, which *Joſephus* makes mention of, *Lib.* 15. *Cap.* 14. A few Things may let us in to the Knowledge of this: 1. By *Temple*, we are not to underſtand any *material Edifice*, but that which was typified by the Temple, where we are to mean all the Elect, *Ye are the Temple of the Living God*, 2 Cor. vi. 16. Here God only is worſhipped and ſerved. 2. Chriſt calls this the *Temple of my God*; not as if he were not alſo the God of the Elect, but becauſe he only is the God of the *Elect*, as he is the God of the *Mediator*: For he firſt by his Blood extinguiſhed the Flame of Divine *Juſtice*, and thereby made Way for the Manifeſtation of his *Mercy*. Believers are alſo called the Stones of this Temple, *Ye alſo, as lively Stones, are built up a ſpiritual Houſe.* As there are many Stones in one Houſe, ſo there are many Saints go to compleat this Edifice. This Work has been collecting ſince the *Beginning*, and will be continued to the *End* of the World: For, as ſoon as the Elect are gathered, the World will be at an End. In this Edifice, there will be a great Variety; *for Beauty lies in Diverſity and Harmony.* Among other Things, there will be three *Pillars*: This is a Word we find often mentioned in Scripture, but not always in the ſame Senſe; yet, wherever it is, it ſtill Points out to us ſomething of both *Strength* and *Beauty*. We have a great many *Pillars* mentioned in the Building of the Tabernacle, and not a few in the *Temple*; nor are we to doubt but the *Pillars*, here mentioned, allude to them: Yet it is not convenient to ſift all the Corners of this *Metaphor*; it is ſufficient we underſtand by *Pillars*, ſomething that is of ſpecial Uſe in the Fabrick. In this Senſe, we have *Peter* and *James* deſigned *Pillars of the Church*, Gal. ii. 9. If it be objected, It ſeems all Overcomers are *Pillars*, and what then ſhall become of the reſt of the Temple? for it is not to be ſuppoſed it will be all *Pillars*. Some think this Objection ſufficient to defeat the moſt obvious and plauſible Senſe of the Words: Yet, to carry it off, it would be conſidered, theſe Promiſes do not contain any Thing peculiar to this and that Part of the Building, as if one Part was to be a Pillar, and another to conſtitute a Window, *&c.* becauſe here we have mention only of *Pillars*, and not of any other Part of the Temple; ſo that, from the General, *Temple*, and the Part, *Pillar*, we cannot ſpell out the ſeveral Parts of the *Fabrick*: And therefore we are to underſtand by *Pillar*, that which is the moſt natural and plain Senſe thereof, *viz. Stability* and *Beauty*.

2*d* Promiſe, *They ſhall go no more out.* This may well be allowed to be an Inference from the former, That, becauſe they are *Pillars*, therefore they ſhall not be removed. Yet this will not hold; for the great Pillars *Solomon* put in the *Temple* were removed, and

and carried to Babylon, *Jer.* lii. 17. which makes ſome think, this here is to diſtinguiſh theſe *Spiritual* Pillars from thoſe *Material* Ones. Others think, this is with Alluſion to our *Firſt Parents* in the Garden of *Eden*; that, tho' they were happy there, yet their Satisfaction was not laſting, for they were baniſhed out of it. Others think this to be a Comfort againſt the then State of the poor Chriſtians, who were baniſhed out of Synagogues and all other Societies; whereas here we have a Promiſe of their *Stability* in their ſeveral Conditions, as if they were Pillars. *Laſtly*, Some think this to be a plain Security againſt Defection, and a Promiſe of Perſeverance. Theſe Senſes are not ſo different, but they may all conſpire in one, *viz.* the laſt given. And it ſufficiently refells the *Pelagian* Cavil, where, tho' they own none ſhall be able to *pluck the Elect out of God's Hand*, yet ſay, This does not hinder but that thro' their own Fault and Guilt they may depart; and ſo there is no ſuch Thing as Perſeverance: For here it is ſaid, *They ſhall go out no more*; where two Negatives make a very ſtrong one.

3*d* Promiſe, *I will write upon him the Name of my God.* This alſo they would borrow from the Cuſtom of the *Romans*, who uſed to inſcribe upon their *Pillars*, the Names of theſe in whoſe Honour they were erected: But here they are quite out of it; for not the Names of the *Overcomers*, but the Name of God is written thereon. Others ſay, It alludes to *Solomon*'s two Pillars, called *Jachin*, and *Boaz*, 1 *Kings* vii. 21. But neither will this do; for it is not ſaid that *Solomon* wrote any Thing upon theſe Pillars, only that he named them ſo and ſo. As little will it take Place here, that this is to be meant of the *Gentile* Church; for this will be verified of all Believers, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*. That which I take to be the Senſe of it is, *I will engrave upon him the Reſemblance of my God*; and ſo it diſtinguiſhes the Faithful from the Worſhippers of the Beaſt, who are ſaid to have his Name upon them, *Chap.* xiii. 17. See on *Chap.* xxii. 4.

4*th* Promiſe, I will write upon him *the Name of the City of my God, which is* New Jeruſalem, *which cometh down out of Heaven.* The Throng of Expoſitors carry this to Heaven ſtraight, even theſe who allow the reſt to point at the Church upon Earth: Nor can I ſee any Reaſon for their ſo doing, but becauſe they make *Chap.* xxi. intirely refer to Heaven, where we have the ſame Account as here. To enter upon the Merits of that Cauſe, were plainly to anticipate our Work: At the Time I ſhall ſay no more, but that, however by *Second-hand* and *Mediately*, it may be meant of the *State* of the Glorified; yet I chooſe rather to go in with theſe who underſtand it of the *Church* on Earth: And it ſeems to come in very appoſitely, after God, who is their Father, is mentioned before; ſo that the Church, who is their Mother, falls naturally next to be named. I only notice, a few Things from the Words may confirm this, (1.) The Deſignation of this City, *New Jeruſalem.* All know what is to be meant of the *Old Jeruſalem*, which is not the Senſe here: And that by the *New*, we are to underſtand the *Truth*, of what the Old was only the *Figure*; and this is nothing but the *New Teſtament Church* upon Earth. (2.) This City is ſaid to *come down from Heaven*, becauſe it is of an *heavenly Original*; but then this ſays it is not in Heaven, ſo long as it continues in that State, however like to Heaven it may be. But ſtill a Difficulty remains, What then is this new Name promiſed them more than what they had before? *Anſwer*, This Promiſe ſeems to point at a Perfection in Grace, the abſolutely neceſſary Diſpoſition of theſe who would enter Heaven; and ſo the Promiſe is, They ſhould have all to *make them meet for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.*

5*th* Promiſe, I will write upon them *my new Name.* By this *new Name* of Chriſt we are to underſtand that Name he had beſtowed upon him after his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion, which we have mentioned often in Scripture, *Philip.* ii. 9. *Eph.* i. 20, 21. which in one Word is, he was conſtitute *Conqueror* or victorious, for till that Time he was wreſtling and fighting; and ſo the Senſe of this is, that in Chriſt they ſhall be *Conquerors*, yea, and more than Conquerors. Others ſtruggle this Name is to be called *New*, not ſo much with reſpect to Chriſt, as to the Believers, who will then be exactly framed according to his gracious *Image.* Theſe Two are not ſo diſtant, but, with little Difficulty, they may be reconciled.

The Periodiſts are no leſs troubled about this Epiſtle, which they make the ſixth Period of the Church, than about the former: The Throng of them make it to point at the After-ſteps of the Reformation, as in *Helvetia*, *Geneva*, *France*, *Holland*, *Britain*, &c. Others think, this points at that Period of the Church about the *Fall* of *Antichriſt*, which they differently determine according to their ſeveral Views of the following Part of this Prophecy.

EPISTLE VII.

14 And unto the Angel of the Church of the Laodiceans write, Theſe Things ſaith the Amen, the Faithful and True Witneſs, the Beginning of the Creation of God.

THIS City of *Laodicea* was very conſiderable; it lay to the South of *Philadelphia*, upon the River *Lycus* or *Dyrus*, a little above its Conjunction with *Meander*: It is neareſt to *Epheſus* of any of the reſt. It is evident there was a Church there of old; for the Apoſtle ordered his Epiſtle to the *Coloſſians to be read in the Church of the* Laodiceans, *Col.* iv. 16. This City was very wealthy by its Trade, both by Land and the River. Its Soil is very fertile, and produced great Numbers of excellent Sheep, whoſe Wool was almoſt equal to Silk in Softneſs, and of the pureſt Black; which Commodity brought them a great yearly Income: Their Plenty begat Luxury, as is uſual. It was at firſt called *Dioſpolis*, or the City of *Jupiter*; but, being deſtroyed by an Earthquake, was rebuilt by its Inhabitants ſhortly after, and was augmented and adorned by *Antiochus*, and named *Laodicea*, after his Wife *Laodice* the Daughter of *Stratonice*. Finally, it was fortified and got the finiſhing Stroke from *Auguſtus*, who was ſo much taken with its Situation and Soil, that he honoured it with a Deputy or Lieutenant, on whom he beſtowed the Title of *King*. In this City Chriſt had a Church, who, by their Plenty, and it may be a looſe Court, were ſoon corrupted in the Truth and Purity of their Lives; and therefore our Lord directs this very plain and rouzing Epiſtle to them, that he might bring them to themſelves, and to conſider their Danger.

The Characters Chriſt takes to himſelf, when he writes to this Church, are three, which we ſhall view, ſo far as we have not explained them before.

1. He calls himſelf *the Amen*. We had this Word before, *Chap.* i. 18. but *adverbially* taken; here it is a Noun, as is evident from the Particle of the *Maſculine Gender* ὁ. Some are of the Mind the Word imports Subjection; and they take it in this Place to be a Remembrance of Chriſt's active and paſſive Obedience: It properly ſignifies, *Truſty, Steady, Firm* or *Sure*. The Apoſtle has it in the ſame Senſe, while he tells us, 2 *Cor.* i. 20. *All the Promiſes are in Chriſt Yea, and Amen*; and therefore the Churches may well depend upon him.

2. *The Faithful and True Witneſs*; of this we ſpoke, *Chap.* i. 5.

3. *The Beginning of the Creation of God.* The *Arians* and *Socinians* greedily ſnatch at this Text, to diſprove the Divinity of Chriſt, but without Reaſon; for it will not follow that Chriſt is a mere Creature, becauſe he is called the *Beginning of the Creation*: For it is not to be underſtood *paſſively*, but *actively*; as if he were only the Chief, or the Prince of the Creatures of God, but as he is the Cauſe of Creation, *i. e.* the *Creator*; and ſo it is ſaid, *Eph.* iii. 9. *God created all Things by Jeſus Chriſt.* And, *Col.* i. 16. *For by him*, i. e. Jeſus Chriſt, *were all Things created that are in Heaven and in Earth*, &c. And, *John* i. 3. *All Things were made by him.* It is true, as to his Humane Nature, he may be called the Chief or principal Part of the Creation of God: For never any of the Creatures were honoured with the *Hypoſtatical* Union with the ſecond Perſon of the glorious Trinity; And therefore it is ſaid, *The Fulneſs of the Godhead dwells bodily in him*, Col. ii. 9. No Character could be more rouzing to a *luke-warm* Church than this, to inform them of the Spring and Principal of all Life, whether natural or ſpiritual.

15 I know thy Works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

16 So then becauſe thou art luke-warm, and neither cold nor hot, I will ſpue thee out of my Mouth:

17 Becauſe thou ſayeſt, I am rich, and increaſed in Goods, and have Need of nothing; and knoweſt not that thou art wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

18 I counſel thee to buy of me Gold tried in the Fire, that thou mayeſt be rich, and white Raiment, that thou mayeſt be clothed, and

that

that the Shame of thy Nakedneſs do not appear; and anoint thine Eyes with Eye-ſalve, that thou mayeſt ſee.

19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chaſten: Be zealous therefore, and repent.

20 Behold, I ſtand at the Door and knock: If any Man will hear my Voice, and open the Door, I will come in to him, and will ſup with him, and he with me.

Where we have, 1. An Accuſation, *v.* 15. 2. A ſuitable Threatning, *v.* 16, 17. 3. A pat Direction, *v.* 18. 4. A Conſolation, *v.* 19, 20.

I. We have an Accuſation exhibite againſt this Church, where we may notice, 1. The Charge againſt them. 2. Chriſt's Reflection thereon.

1. We have the Charge, *Thou art neither cold nor hot*; which is explained by another Word, *v.* 16. *Luke-warm*; this ſignifies a middle State betwixt Heat and Cold, ſo as to partake of the Nature of both, and yet be neither. Here we muſt know both what Heat and Cold is, that we may conceive what is neither. This we may do the more eaſily, when we know this to be a *proverbial* Speech, which may be applied to all Subjects, and, in the Life of the Sentence, ſounds very rank of Indifferency. Some would have it to be of the ſame Force with that, *A Halting between two Opinions*, 1 Kings xviii. 21. But this ſavours of more Thought than can well be allowed in the preſent Caſe. We have another *proverbial* Expreſſion, that ſeems to be nearer, *Hoſ.* vii. 8. *Ephraim is a Cake not turned*; i. e. having one Side ſomewhat hot and baik'd, but the other quite raw; and therefore, by *Cold*, we are to underſtand a Perſon of no Religion, having neither Profeſſion nor Practice; and, by *Hot*, we are to mean a true fervent Chriſtian, who makes Conſcience to receive the Truths of God, and to behave himſelf accordingly in his Life: Hence it will be eaſy to find out, what they are, who are neither the one, nor the other. We have a *Proverb* that anſwers very near to this *Scriptural* one, when we ſay, *One is neither good Fiſh, nor good Fleſh.* This *Proverb* is certainly borrowed from theſe amphibious Creatures, that feed ſometimes in the Sea, and ſometimes on the Land, and therefore cannot properly be claſſed with Fiſhes or Land-creatures, but partake ſomething of the Nature of both. I ſhall give my Thoughts of the Contents of this Text negatively, and then poſitively. *Negatively*, 1. They were not deſtitute of all Profeſſion of Religion. 2. They were not ignorant of the Principles thereof, they had at leaſt a Head and notional Knowledge. 3. They were not prophane and openly debauched in Practice. *Poſitively*, 1. They were looſe and indifferent about the Profeſſion of Chriſt; they could at Times own him, and, when it was for their Safety or Intereſt, diſpenſe with their open Profeſſion; and either, as the *Jeſuites* do, diſſemble; or, as others amongſt even Proteſtants do, be ſilent, when their Duty is, to confeſs him openly. 2. They were Strangers to Saving Knowledge; they might ſpeak indeed, yea, and aſſent, but their Hearts were not impreſt with the Truths of God. 3. They were untender in their Converſations; for tho' they were not downright *ſcandalous*, yet they were Strangers to Heart and Life-holineſs.

2. There is our Lord's Reflection on this State. *I would thou wert cold or hot.* This we are not to underſtand of any *inefficacious* Will in Chriſt, as ſome blaſphemouſly aſſert; for ſuch Expreſſions often occur in Scripture, and are to be underſtood after the Manner of Man: *Deut.* xxxii. 29. *O that they were wiſe, that they underſtood this, and conſidered their latter End!* Deut. v. 29. *Oh that there were ſuch an Heart in them, that they would fear me!* &c. And again, *Mat.* xxiii. 37. *How often would I have gathered thy Children together, even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings*, &c. In all which Places, as well as the Text, it is evident, our Lord diſcovers his Love in a very diſtinguiſhing Manner to ſomething, and his Averſion to what is oppoſite thereto. And, in them all, *Sincerity* and *Zeal* is what he commends, and *Indifferency* and *Hypocriſy* what he condemns. Nor muſt we have ſuch a groſs Notion of this, as if *Zeal* and *Coldneſs* were equally deſirable to Chriſt, or that he could in the leaſt approve of *Coldneſs*; But becauſe *Luke-warmneſs* is more diſhonourable to him, and deſtructive to the Soul, than downright Irreligion. This will be evident from a few Conſiderations, 1. Tho' the *Atheiſt* and the *Hypocrite* be both in the high Road to Hell, there ſeem to be ſeverer Puniſhments reſerved for the *Hypocrite*, than the *Pagan* or *Infidel*; As Chriſt ſays, *Mat.* xxiv. 51. *Cut him aſunder, and appoint him his Portion with Hypocrites.* 2. The Honour of Chriſt is not ſo obnoxious to Reproach by an open *Atheiſt*, as a cover'd *Hypocrite*, who brings a mighty Blot upon Religion, *Ezek.* xx. 39. *As for you, O Houſe of* Iſrael, *thus ſaith the Lord God, Go ye ſerve every one his Idols,*

and hereafter alſo if ye will not hearken unto me: But pollute ye my Name no more with your Gifts; plainly ſhewing, his Name was more prophaned by Hypocriſy, than it could be by their open Idolatry. 3. There is more Hope of an openly prophane Perſon, than of an *Hypocrite*, Mat. xxiii. 31. *Verily, I ſay unto you, That Publicans and Harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you.* The Reaſon is, The *Prophane* ly more open to *Conviction* than the *Hypocrite*, who are commonly ſelf-conceited, and have ſomething to quiet the Tumult of a natural Conſcience. 4. *Hypocriſy* is a greater Sin than *Prophanity*, tho' it be not ſo ſcandalous while it is not diſcovered, becauſe it is a downright *Reſiſting of the Holy Ghoſt*; Which was ſpoken to Hypocrites, *Acts* vii. 51.

II. There is a terrible Threatning, with the Grounds thereof, denounced againſt them, *v.* 16, 17. where is to be noticed,

1. The Threatning; *Therefore I will ſpue thee out of my Mouth, v.* 16. This Threatning is exactly adapted to their Condition; for what is quick *hot*, or quite *cold*, does not provoke the Stomach, as what is *luke-warm*: So that the Spirit of God is ſtill proſecuting the *Metaphor*; and the Intendment of the Threatning is, that God would finally reject them. 'Tis indiſputable, this Threatning is conditional, as is evident from *v.* 18. Yet it is as certain, if his Advice was taken, the Miſchief would not overtake them. The Greatneſs of this Evil denounced, will caſt up, by conſidering the Alluſion, in theſe Particulars.

(1.) They were very diſagreeable to the Mind of God, who loves Truth in the inward Parts; for we only vomit up what is diſagreeable to the Stomach.

(2.) It was a ſtraitning Thing with Chriſt to caſt them off: For ſo much is implied in the Act of *Vomiting*, which is done with Difficulty and Trouble; as he ſays, *Hoſ.* xi. 6. *How ſhall I give thee up*, Ephraim? *how ſhall I give thee up*, Iſrael? *how ſhall I make thee as* Admah? *how ſhall I ſet thee as* Zeboim?

(3.) Chriſt would abhor them: For what is *vomited*, we *lothe*; and ſo, as an Evidence of his Lothing, he would vomit them up, as he ſays, *Zech.* xi. 8. *My Soul lothed them.*

(4.) They would be lothſom to others, as whatever is vomit up is to all Spectators; which may point at the pulling off their Mask, and diſcovering them in their native Colours, when they would be as hateful to good Men, as before to God.

2. The Grounds of this Threatning, which ſome rather chooſe to make the formal Reaſon of the following Exhortation; for my Share, I ſee no Matter of Debate about that. I take this 17 *v.* to be a further Illuſtration of their Condition mentioned *v.* 15. and ſo gives Ground to the Threatning, *v.* 16. and this, no Doubt, is alſo a Reaſon why our Lord gives the following Counſel, which is a Plaiſter exactly cut for the Sore: And ſeeing all the Parts of the Epiſtle hang ſo exactly together, there ſeems to be no Ground of Debate. But the greateſt Difficulty is about the Senſe of theſe Expreſſions: Some would have them taken literally, and ſo point at external Riches, which they valued themſelves upon, and that in Oppoſition to them Chriſt adviſes them to ſeek after true Riches. This ſeems not to be the Whole, or the greateſt Part of the Senſe, if it be any of it at all, as will be plain, when we conſider, 1. They are flattering themſelves with what conſtitutes them a *famous* Church; which, I think, none will affirm to be *Temporal Riches*. 2. Their real State, mentioned in the Cloſe of this Verſe, muſt be the Reverſe of their imaginary Condition, in the Beginning thereof. Now, who ſays, that Poverty, Blindneſs, *&c.* are to be meant of literal and external Poverty? *&c.* elſe we ſhould have but a moſt indifinct Account of their Caſe. 3. 'Tis plain they made Pretenſions to what Chriſt only can give, *viz. Spiritual Riches*; and therefore he finds Fault with theirs, becauſe not tried; whatever Appearance they might have, they had no Reality. 4. Had they valued themſelves merely upon worldly Riches, he would, no doubt, have advanced another Admonition againſt them: But not one Word of this. Now, conſider then, in this Verſe, theſe two Things, 1. Their fancied Condition. 2. Their real Caſe.

(1.) We have what they fancied about themſelves, in three Expreſſions, *I am rich, and increaſed with Goods* [or rather, I have been enriched] *and have Need of nothing.* Theſe then muſt point at their Religion, and the Opinion they had of it; and to be ſure this Multiplication of Expreſſions is not in vain: They may, in the Mind of ſome, reſpect a threefold Time; the firſt the *Preſent*; the ſecond the *Preterite*, they had been ſo of a long Time; the third a preſumptuous Opinion, *They would not grow worſe.* Others again, by the firſt, underſtand their affected Grace, that it was real; and, by the ſecond Expreſſion, their Increaſe or Growth is inſinuate; and ſo, by the third, they flatter themſelves, they ſhould perſevere. A third Opinion is, As to the firſt and third the ſame with this laſt; and, they think, the ſecond is a vain Boaſting, that all this was owing to their own Endeavours: Indeed the Force of the Word is not averſe to this, which ſignifies properly, *I*

have

have made rich. Upon the Whole, they thought themſelves as good as they need to be. Then there is the Evidence they gave of it, even their own Word, *Thou ſays*; ſo that added to their *Hypocriſy*, they were *vain-glorious.* Indeed theſe two are Twins, *They ſay, Stand by thy ſelf, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou,* Iſa. lxv. 5. And, if we collate this with the following Clauſe, it is plain they thought ſo; *Thou knoweſt not that thou art wretched. Hypocrites* may be much deceived about themſelves; for an eager Deſire to be thought more than they are, may betray them to think they are what they ſhould be, *Jer.* ii. 23. *How canſt thou ſay, I am not polluted, I have not gone after* Baalim? *&c. v.* 35. *Yet thou ſays, I am innocent.* Yet, it is plain enough, whether this flow from Ignorance or Deſign, it will not excuſe before God, either in leſs or more.

(2.) We have their real Condition, in the reſt of the Verſe, which is manifeſtly the Reverſe of what they gave it out to be; and herein is verified what the Apoſtle ſays, *Gal.* vi. 3. *If a Man think himſelf to be ſomething, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himſelf.* Some perplex this Portion of Scripture, by their various ordering theſe five Branchings of the true State of this Church. To eſcape this, I ſhall conſider them in that Order we have them here; 1. *Thou art wretched.* Some think this to import ſome terrible bodily Affliction, which incapacitate them for any Exerciſe: But then, whence ſo much Pride, as in the firſt Part of the Text? For outward Troubles are the moſt effectual Cure of this ſpiritual Malady. The native Force of the Word does indeed diſcover a miſerable Condition, but yet ſuch as has Inſenſibility coupled therewith: This ſeems plainly the Senſe of the Text, *Thou knoweſt not that thou art wretched.* Beſides, the Import of the Word directs to this; for it comes from a *Root* that ſignifies the *Brawn*, or callous Parts of a Work-man's Hand, or a Foot-man's Feet, made inſenſible by Labour or Travel. The Apoſtle *Paul* uſes the Word plainly to the ſame Purpoſe, *Rom.* vii. 24. *O wretched Man that I am!* and then he complains *of a Body of Death*, which is moſt inſenſible. 2. *Thou art miſerable*, or *lamentable*, or deplorable in thy State. They believed they were more to be envied than pitied; but they were miſtaken, for they were more to be pitied than envied: The Word imports ſuch a Miſery, as is not capable of Conſolation from others. 3. *Thou art poor*, i. e. weak and empty, deſtitute of Strength and Means to recover themſelves. 4. *Blind*, which was a great Aggravation of their Miſery; they ſaw it not, and as little did they know how to remedy it. 5. *Naked*, i. e. deſtitute of Covering or Shelter. This ſeems to point at the Want of an *Intereſt* in Chriſt, at leaſt as to the moſt Part of them, and that the reſt had no Evidence thereof. The Aggravation of all this is, *Thou knoweſt not:* Some render it, Thou does not acknowledge, and it is a Reproof to them; that they did not allow the Word of Conviction; there wanted not Grounds in Plenty, but they were deaf as to all Reaſoning upon that Head. 'Tis moſt certain (and a woful Truth it is) none are more preſumptuous, than theſe who have leaſt Reaſon to be ſo. Others again keep cloſs by the Tranſlation, and ſo it declares their Ignorance: And thus we ſee *Satan* many a Time ſucceeds, by this Method of getting a Perſon to dote upon their own Attainments, without Ground, to their utter Ruin, when he cannot decoy them either to Error or Licentiouſneſs.

III. We have a *ſuitable Direction* upon the Back of all this, *v.* 18. Whence it is plain, however *bad* their State was, it was not *deſperate*; for we have the Cure of all their Maladies, and the Way of Acquiſition: Where we note,

1. That which they wanted, and might have for the Supply of their Wants. The Suitableneſs is apparent, from the threefold Remedy of their threefold Miſery, which we heard were *Poverty, Blindneſs, Nakedneſs*; to which he oppoſed *Gold, white Raiment, and Eye-Salve.* Some are much ſtraitned as to the Application of theſe; I ſhall only ſay now in the general, We may here underſtand Chriſt himſelf, and all the great and neceſſary Benefits and Privileges he has purchaſed, and will beſtow upon his Elect; And that theſe three contain in them all that is neceſſary for Salvation, from the firſt Step of Grace, to the Cope-ſtone of Glory, 1 *Cor.* i. 30. *For to all that are in Chriſt, he is of God made Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification and Redemption.* Now, this being eſtabliſhed, we may be the leſs ſolicitous about Particulars; tho' I ſhall not neglect ſeverally and ſhortly to view them: As, 1. *Gold tried in the Fire*: This is here given as the Remedy of *Poverty*, literally taken; this we know holds exactly. The Poverty I ſhewed was a Body of Sin, and will comprehend both Original and Actual: There are abundance of Thoughts about this; ſome thereby underſtand the *Word of God*, which diſcovers both our natural Miſery, and ſupernatural Remedy, *Pſal.* xii. 7. *The Words of the Lord are pure Words, as Silver tried in a Furnace of Earth ſeven Times.* And again, *Pſal.* cxix. 127. *I love thy Commandments above fine Gold.* Others, by Gold, underſtand the *precious Blood of Chriſt*, whereby Sinners are

redeemed from the Hand of Juſtice: To this we have an Alluſion, 1 *Pet.* i. 18. *Ye were not redeemed by corruptible Things, as Silver or Gold, from your vain Converſations,---but with the precious Blood of Chriſt.* Theſe two may be coupled together, and then I make no Doubt but the Scope of the *Holy Spirit* is touched: As for other Notions, being leſs ſolid, I take no Notice of them. But 'tis further added, concerning this Gold, It is *tried in the Fire.* Some tell us, there is no ſure Trial of Gold but by the Fire; and ſo the Senſe of this Clauſe is, that which is here meant by *Gold,* has undergone all the *Trial poſſible,* to diſcover it to be genuine: This is true of the *Word of God,* which has been tried for many Thouſands of Years, and has abiden the Trial: It has been tried further in the Experience of all the Saints from the Beginning of the World. And as to Chriſt, he is often called *Tried,* as well as *Choſen,* in Scripture; and was really *Tried* by the Fire of Divine Wrath. All this makes a notable Anatheſis to their imaginary wealthy Eſtate; and proves, that, while they are Strangers to Chriſt, they were in a moſt miſerable State of Poverty. 2. *White Raiment*: This is given as the proper Cure of their Nakedneſs. Of this I ſpoke before, on *v.* 5. of this Chapter; here it ſeems plainly to be requiſite in an Elect Soul, in Order to Glory. This then may ſignify the *Righteouſneſs* of Chriſt, which ſhelters from Wrath, and covers all our Defects and Imperfections. In which Senſe we have it by the Prophet, *Iſa.* lxi. 10. *He hath clothed me with the Garments of Salvation; for he hath covered me with the Robe of Righteouſneſs, as a Bridegroom decketh himſelf with Ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth herſelf with Jewels.* Some think, by this *white Robe,* we are to mean Sanctification, *Col.* iii. 12. *Put on therefore as the Elect of God (holy and beloved) Bowels of Mercies, Kindneſs, Humbleneſs of Mind,* &c. When both theſe are joined together, they will make a very ſufficient Senſe. 3. And *Eye-Salve*; Original, *Eye-Salve to anoint,* or the Anointing of thine Eyes. This Word is much uſed by the Sons of *Medicine,* and is in Diſpenſatories, as in the Text, *Collyrium*: It properly ſignifies an Ointment, or a Lotion for the Eyes, when they are afflicted. In a ſpiritual Senſe, it muſt ſignify the Illumination of the Holy Ghoſt, *Eph.* i. 18. *The Eyes of your Underſtanding being enlightned, that ye may know what is the Hope of his Calling.* And yet more plainly, if any Thing can be ſo, this ſame Apoſtle tells us of the *Anointing that we have received of Chriſt,* 1 John ii. 27. The Deſign of this is, that they might ſee. In all theſe three, it is very plain that a Senſe of our Miſery is neceſſary to our Cure.

2. We have the Direction how theſe valuable Things may be procured. It is moſt natural, when we hear of any Thing excellent (eſpecially if it be abſolutely neceſſary, and highly ſtedable) as ſoon as we hear of its Nature, to immediately ask where it is to had? How ſhall we come by it? &c. And thus our Lord condeſcends to this miſerable Church, to direct her how ſhe ſhall better her Condition. And, in this Direction, I ſhall notice,

(1.) From whom theſe Things are to be had, *Of me.* Chriſt is the only Merchant, and theſe Wares are not to be found in any other Shop but his: As all Merchants are fond of *Cuſtomers,* ſo no leſs our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who calls this poor Church, and does not ask what ſhe lacked (for that ſhe knew not) but advertiſes her at once of her Need, and the Method whereby ſhe might be ſupplied; he very kindly invites her to himſelf. And indeed a Perſon has made no ſmall Progreſs in Religion, when he is brought that Length, as to ſee what he wants, can be nowhere found but in Chriſt: As we ſee from the Apoſtles, *John* vi. 68. *To whom ſhall we go? thou haſt the Words of eternal Life.* And, as this ſame Apoſtle remarks of the Teſtimony given Chriſt by the *Baptiſt,* John i. 16. *Out of his Fulneſs have we all received, and Grace for Grace.*

(2.) The Way how they were to be provided of theſe Things, *Buy them,* ſays he. This Word is very often uſed in Scripture, to ſhew the Acquiſition of Grace, *Prov.* iii. 14. *The Merchandize of Wiſdom is better than the Merchandize of Silver.* Prov. xxiii. 23. *Buy the Truth, and ſell it not.* Yet does not this ſuppoſe any adequate and ſolid Price to be weighed or told, in Order to the Poſſeſſion of theſe Riches, Raiment, and Eye-Salve; for that is impoſſible: Whether we conſider the Nature of the Things, for they are above all Value; or the State of the Buyers, they were poor, and had nothing to give. So that, were this the Intendment of the Direction, it would be a Piece of cruel Mocking to this Church; and would be juſt the ſame, as if we ſhould tell a poor Beggar, ready to ſtarve, I will give you Food, if you will pay me what it is worth; and yet, in the mean Time, his Purſe is as empty as his Belly. Again, the infinite Bounty and Liberality of this Merchant, quite excludes all Thoughts of this Nature. From theſe Words, we have the Nature of this Market plainly repreſented to us by the Prophet *Iſaiah,* Chap. lv. 1. *Ho, every One that thirſteth, come ye to the Waters, and ye that have no Money; come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy Wine and Milk with-*

without Money, and without Price. But then it may be enquired, Seeing Grace is to be had freely, why does the *Holy Ghoſt* ſo often repreſent it to us under the Notion of *Buying*? I anſwer, This *Metaphor* holds out to us ſeveral Things in our obtaining Grace, that are very intrinſick to Buying: As, 1. An ardent Deſire of the Things, as highly convenient, yea neceſſary to us. 2. A laborious Search after the ſame: As we ſee People travel far to Markets for what they want, and very ſerious that they may compaſs it; ſo muſt we be by Prayer, *&c.* 3. A glad Receiving of Grace offered; for we find it is ſaid of them, *They are worthy of all Acceptation.* 4. A careful Preſerving, Uſing, and Improving of it. 5. An intire Surrendring of ourſelves in Return thereof; yea, and to be willing to quit all, rather than forgo it in whole or in Part.

(3.) The Way and Manner how Chriſt introduceth this, *I counſel thee*: This is an ordinary Word uſed in Scripture, when Matters of the greateſt Moment are recommended to us, *Prov.* i. 30. *They would none of my Counſel.* This is not done to diſcover the Indifference of the Thing, as the *Papiſts* prat, for Goſpel *Precepts* are no more obliging than Goſpel *Advices*; and the Danger of deſpiſing thoſe, is as capital as the Breach of theſe: And we find Chriſt called the *Wonderful Counſellor*, as well as the *Sovereign Judge.* But the Reaſon why ſuch a ſoft Word is uſed here, and in other Places, is, becauſe he here acts not the Part of a Lord only, but alſo of a faithful Friend; and perſwades it is as much our Intereſt, as his own Glory, he has at Heart in theſe Matters.

IV. There is a very merciful and complex *Conſolation*, *v.* 19, 20. which may be reduced to two Generals, as the Grounds of Comfort, introduced with the Character of theſe to whom *he* manifeſts himſelf, either under the Frowns of an *Offended*, or the gaining Methods of a *Reconcileable* Father: And from all, there are diſcovered the moſt *moving* Arguments to reduce them from that *tepid* State.

1. We have the Character of theſe whom he thus treats, *As many as I love.* Theſe Words certainly point at a *ſpecial*, and not a *general* Love; for, had all Mankind an equal Claim to this Love, which ſounds a Love of *Benevolence*, it would not be poſſible to make Senſe of this Character; for *as many*, in the Opinion of all, ſounds *ſo many*, and therefore muſt be excluſive of *ſome*, yea of a *great many.* *Grammarians* obſerve, the natural Force of this Phraſe ſignifies, but a few out of many, or all; and beſides, it plainly reſtricts the after-mentioned Methods to this deſigned Quality: So that none whom God does not love, can expect he will treat them after this Method; which ſays, God will not take the Trouble to debate with theſe he has abandoned, but ſuffers them to go on without Check: And ſo we read, *Acts* xiv. 16. *In Times paſt, he ſuffered all Nations to walk in their own Ways.* And yet more expreſly, after he has given the Characters of theſe he hates, it is added, *Rom.* i. 24. *Wherefore God gave them up to Uncleanneſs*, &c. Whereas we find his Love expreſſed by theſe Tokens here mentioned, *Prov.* iii. 12. *Whom the Lord loveth, he correcteth, even as a Father the Son in whom he delighteth.* To the ſame Purpoſe, the Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith, *Heb.* xii. 6. *Whom the Lord loveth, he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every Son whom he receiveth.*

2. We have the firſt Ground of Comfort from God's afflicting Diſpenſations, in two, the one deſigned to enforce the other; The firſt is, *I rebuke*: This is a verbal Chaſtiſement, which to a generous Soul is very cutting, and much more ſo to One that is regenerate. This does not ſo much exhibite to us a Reproof wrapt up in hard and opprobrious Words, as a rational Inculcation of our Guilt upon our Conſciences, in order to bring to a Senſe of Sin; and, in this Senſe, the Word of Chriſt is ſaid to be *profitable for Reproof, for Correction, for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs*, 2 Tim. iii. 16. And, to make this Word the more effectual, he has promiſed to add his Spirit, *John* xvi. 8. *When the Spirit is come, he will reprove the World of Sin.* 2. *I chaſten.* When Words are not regarded, they are followed with Blows: When *Folly is bound up in the Heart of a Child, then will he drive it forth by the Rod of Correction.* Thus the Prophet ſaid of old, *Iſa.* xxvi. 9. *When thy Judgments are abroad in the Earth, the Inhabitants of the World will learn Righteouſneſs:* And ſo παθήματα are μαθήματα.

And, to ſhew this to be a comfortable Doctrine, he adds a Direction, which declares his Deſign in the Chaſtiſement, and their Duty under it; as is plain from the Illative *therefore*, which uſhers it in, *Be zealous and repent.* Some make this a *Hebraiſm*, and the Senſe of it to be, Be zealous in your Repentance, becauſe their Sin was very great. I ſhall allow this *Luke-warmneſs* would coſt them a very hearty Repentance; But it looks to be a more compleat Senſe, to allow the Remedy of their former *Tepidneſs* to be *Zeal*, this being the very Reverſe of that: And that added to this, they ſhould alſo *repent*; and ſo the firſt is of the ſame Meaning with that Exhortation, *Rom.* xii. 11. *Be fervent in Spirit, ſerving the Lord.* The other is what we had formerly.

3. We have the ſecond Ground of Comfort from the Diſpenſation of his Grace, *v.* 20. where are to be noticed Chriſt's Exerciſe, and his Promiſe.

(1.) There is his Exerciſe, *Behold, I ſtand at the Door and knock.* The Preface, *Behold*, declares what a ſuprizing Step of Goodneſs and Condeſcenſion this is, and beſides the Danger of neglecting it: This no doubt alludes to that of the Church, *Song* v. 2. It *is the Voice of my Beloved that knocketh.* By *Door*, all underſtand the *Entrance* into the Heart, which Sin had ſhut upon Chriſt. His Exerciſes are two, 1. *He ſtands*, or, as it may be rendred, *I have ſtood*; which ſhews this to have been his Poſture for ſome Time, and that he was yet in it: It ſhews his preventing Goodneſs; he had laid aſide all Thoughts of Severity towards them, before they had quit their Sin, and he was now ready to receive them; as if he had ſaid, *Separate yourſelves from the unclean Thing, and I will receive you.* It ſhews his Patience, which is wonderfully great, like his Condeſcenſion: And there is further in it, ſomewhat of a Certification; he was ſtanding, and ſo the readier to turn and leave them. 2. He not only ſtood, but he *knocks*. This is an indiſputable Evidence of his Preſence, and Willingneſs to take up his Abode with them. *Chriſt knocks* by his Word outwardly, *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, ariſe from the Dead*, Eph. v. 14. and by his *Providences*, as of *Afflictions* in the former Verſe: And he had further knockt by his Mercies, for they ſhould have *improven the Goodneſs of God to lead them to Repentance.* He knocks alſo inwardly by his *Spirit*, exciting and ſtirring up good Inclinations and Motions, and by Convictions as above.

(2.) His Promiſe, in the reſt of the Verſe, which is moſt comprehenſive. But, before we reach it, we muſt ſpeak a Word of what Chriſt expects and requires of this Church, in order to be poſſeſt of this ſurprizing Mercy: And theſe are two Things, the one, *That they hear my Voice.* This, to be ſure, is to be taken in the ſame Senſe as by the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* xcvii. 7, 8. *To Day if you will hear my Voice, harden not your Heart*: So that it ſignifies Attention with Affection and Submiſſion. The other is, *That they open to him the Door*: It was ſaid, Sin had ſhut it; now, to open the Door, all theſe Bars muſt be broken, that a patent Entry may be made for him. Some think this ſays, It is in our Power to get rid of Sin, and to throw open the Doors of our Hearts: But they miſtake; for tho' here he tells us it is our Duty, he does not ſay it is in our Power; for he has often told elſewhere, it is not, and that *without him we can do nothing*: And when he pleaſeth, he can, and will make his Word *open*, and break through all Obſtructions; as when he called to *Lazarus, Come forth*, it was effectual. But ſtill it is our Duty to be in God's Ways, and improve all the Communications he gives of himſelf: For none knows either their Strength or their Weakneſs, till they exert it to the utmoſt.

Now we are to view the Promiſe, which is twofold; 1. *I will come in*: By which we are to underſtand a ſtrict Union betwixt Chriſt and the Soul; and the rather, he enters that he may ſtay and abide: Thus the *Union* of the Soul to Chriſt is expreſt, *Eph.* iii. 17. *That Chriſt may dwell in your Hearts by Faith.* And yet more fully in our Lord's own Words, *John* xiv. 23. *My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our Abode with him.* 2. *I will ſup with him, and he with me.* This points out the *Communion* betwixt Chriſt and the Soul, which we ſee is mutual. I know not if it it would be ſafe to make any Work about the *Original* Force of the Word δειπνέω, which, they ſay, ſignifies a Repaſt after Labour; and ſo it contains a Promiſe of Eaſe and Peace to them. This has moved ſome to underſtand the whole of this Verſe to reſpect the End of Time: But, in my Opinion, without ſufficient Reaſon; for this is the ordinary Word, in Scripture, uſed to expreſs the *Lord's Supper*, yea, or any common Meal. Others again, who fiſh for *Myſteries* in every Paſſage of this Book, tell us, The *Supper* is a *Night-Meal*, and ſo it is a Warning they were to meet with more Troubles; becauſe, in Scripture, the *Night* is often an Emblem of Affliction: And that, to ſweeten this to the *Laodiceans*, Chriſt promiſes to be with them, and to honour them with Communion with himſelf; and that he would ſympathize with them. Whatever be in this, which is evidently more ſubtil than ſolid, I am ſure there is here a Promiſe of Communion mutually betwixt Chriſt and Believers; and, while repreſented under the Notion of a *Supper*, does repreſent great Intimacy and Familiarity, mutual Expreſſions of the moſt endearing Love and Friendſhip, and a communicating to other all they are and have. A warm Expreſſion to this Purpoſe we have by the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* xix. 14. *Let the Words of my Mouth, and the Meditations of my Heart be acceptable in thy Sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer.* And on both Sides, by *Solomon*, Song iv. 16. *Awake, O North-wind, and come thou South, blow upon my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out: Let my Beloved come into his Garden, and eat his pleaſant Fruits.* Song v. 1. *I am come into my Garden, my Siſter, my Spouſe; I have gathered,* &c.

21 To

21 To him that overcometh, will I grant to ſit with me in my Throne, even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my Father in his Throne.

22 He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches.

In this Concluſion, we have only to conſider the Promiſe, which ſome think of the ſame Nature with what we had *v.* 12. Others tell us, It is a-kin to what is written *Chap.* ii. *v.* 26, 27. On theſe Accounts it is that few have been at any Pains to inlarge on it. However, we ſhall view, 1. The Thing promiſed. 2. The Illuſtration thereof.

1. There is the great Privilege promiſed, *I will grant to ſit with me in my Throne.* It muſt be owned, all the former Promiſes are very great; but, were they all laid together, they would not amount to the Comprehenſion of this: Yea, the plain Senſe of this is ſuch as is ſufficient to ſtagger the Faith and blunt the Ambition of the greateſt Saint on Earth. But, to mortify them, *Grotius* and ſome others have reſtrained it not a little, and thereby have manifeſtly ſtrained the Text, while they make the Meaning of it to be, *They ſhall ſit upon the Throne which I ſhall give them, even as I was ſet upon the Throne which my Father gave me.* Such Interpretations are not to be admitted that impair the Text, and much leſs ſuch as deſtroy it: For, who that is not *Socinian*, or worſe, dare refuſe but Chriſt is *ſet down on the Right-hand of the Majeſty of God*? Nay, to mince this, is to ſtrike at his Divinity; and, if this be a proper Expreſſion, ſo muſt the other. Again, will we but conſider the gracious Promiſe made in Time to Believers in the preceeding Verſe, which gives a View of the cloſeſt Communion with Chriſt in this Life, while there are Remainders of Corruption, which is ſuch as cannot be exceeded but in Heaven by what we have comprehended here: And this being the *laſt* Encouragement, we may well look upon it to be the *greateſt*; And that, as the reſt do diſcover each of them ſomething of the Bliſs the Saints enjoy either here or above, ſo this gives the finiſhing Stroke to Man's Happineſs; and this is to be look'd upon as the Top-ſtone of Glory: And ſo, no Wonder we be able to ſay little upon it; yet we ſhall ſhortly view,

(1.) The great Step of Advancement, *To ſit in my Throne.* Chap. i. 6. we are told Chriſt makes Believers *Kings*, and here he ſets them upon a *Throne*; ſo that they are not *Mock-Kings*, who have a Name and Pretenſion, without Poſſeſſion: For here we read of their Inveſtiture, and Enthroning, *i. e.* put in the actual Enjoyment of all that Honour ever was promiſed to them, while in a Militant State. It is called *my Throne*, to diſtinguiſh it from all *earthly* Thrones. I ſhall not debate, whether this ſays, the Saints will be raiſed a Peg above the ſtanding Angels; but it is, to be ſure, a diſtinguiſhing Privilege, by which they will differ even from theſe. And further, they are ſaid to *ſit in this Throne*; not like *David*'s and *Solomon*'s Attendants, who waited about their Thrones, but were not allowed to ſit in them. They but dream, who tell us, this is according to the Mode of the Eaſtern Kings, who have their *Thrones* ſo large, as be capable of many Seats, which they beſtow upon their Favourites; for, beſides that, the Thing is falſe; nor will any ever be able to make out this Expreſſion, theſe *Kings* being in all Ages the proudeſt of any in the whole World. We are certainly to underſtand this ſpiritually; nor can any *Simile* be fetcht, that will illuſtrate the Thing, only this points at the Continuation of the Bliſs.

(2.) That which commends this State, they are to *ſit with me*, ſays Chriſt. We would not ſo underſtand this, as if there ſhould be an Equality of Glory beſtowed on Believers, to what the *Mediator* poſſeſſeth; for that they are not capable of: But it ſays, they will be made Partakers of that ſame Glory that the Mediator is exalted to; and ſo this ſame Apoſtle ſays, *We ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* And our Lord prays, *Father, I will, that they may be with me.* All which points out an immediate and uninterrupted Communion that Believers will have in Heaven with Chriſt.

(3.) The Way how Believers are to get this, *I will give it*: Which excludes all Merit, or Pretenſions thereto; all is free Grace, from the firſt to the laſt. But of this we ſpoke before, *Chap.* ii. 7.

2. The Illuſtration of this Promiſe, *Even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my Father in his Throne.* I ſaid before, that the *Sitting with Chriſt* does not include any *Equality*, and as little muſt we look for it here. There are indeed ſeveral Things may commend this to us, from the given Illuſtration, which I only touch.

(1.) This ſuppoſes an Aſſimulation, and aſſures us, that the Union betwixt Chriſt and Believers will be moſt honourable, ſtrict, and laſting; as Chriſt prays, *John* xvii.

21. *That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they alſo may be one in us.* Where the Union betwixt the Father and the Son, is brought to illuſtrate the Union betwixt Chriſt and Believers.

(2.) The ſame Way of attaining this Throne. *Chriſt was made perfect by Sufferings.* And here, he ſays, *He overcame*: Which excludes all who do not fight, and that to the End; as we read, 2 *Tim.* ii. 12. *If we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo reign with him.* There is no other Way to come at it.

(3.) The ſame Way of holding is in both. As Chriſt got his Throne from the Father, ſo Believers are to receive their Throne from Chriſt: Yea, it is by Chriſt's prior Inveſtiture in his Royal Dignity, that Saints have Claim to Glory; as Chriſt ſays, *John* xvii. 2. *Thou haſt given him Power over all Fleſh, that he ſhould give eternal Life to as many as thou haſt given him.*

The *Periodiſts* commonly incline to take this for the laſt Period of the World: Some of them ſay, It is to uſher in the *Day of Judgment*; For the preceeding State of the Church being much decayed, and Eaſe and Peace having in a Manner worm'd out the Power of Godlineſs, little did remain but an empty luke-warm Profeſſion, with a ſtrong Self-conceit. This they further juſtify from our Lord's Words, *Luke* xviii. 8. *When the Son of Man cometh, ſhall he find Faith on the Earth?* But, how ſhall we do with the laſt glorious State of the Church, even in Time, ſo much ſpoke of in this Prophecy, ſeeing nothing has hitherto caſt up that can be applied thereto, nor can we expect it while *Babylon* ſtands? Many incline to date the Beginning of this Period from the Reign of *Charles* V. *Emperor*, about the Year 1519. Others again think that the *Reformation* in *England* under *Edward* VI. and his Siſter *Eliſabeth*, is pointed at in this Epiſtle; and ſo this Period muſt begin about the Year of Chriſt 1547. The Grounds of this Application are taken from the State of their *Hierarchy*, ſwimming in worldly Riches; and their Defection from the Truth, both in Principle and Practice. This is indeed a Charge cannot be refuſed, and which ſome of the ſoberer Sort amongſt themſelves lament: Yet I ſee not how in the general we ſhould allow theſe Epiſtles to denote the Condition of the *univerſal Church*, and yet twiſt ſome of them off from the *univerſal View*, and apply them to *particular Churches*, as *Brightman* endeavours oftner than once.

VISION II.

THIS *Viſion* is purely *Prophetical*, and is by far the moſt voluminous and comprehenſive of any of the reſt; and is indeed ſo intertwiſted with the reſt, that it is manifeſt they all belong to one Purpoſe. According to the Scheme of Partition we laid down at the Beginning, it reaches to the Beginning of the thirteenth Chapter: For not till then do we find *John* brought to a new Theatre; tho', it muſt be acknowedged, the full Purpoſe is at the Cloſe of the eleventh Chapter, and the twelfth and following Chapters are the Illuſtration of what we have from the Beginning of Chapter ſixth, *&c.*

The fourth and fifth Chapters give us the emblematical Diſcovery of the glorious Trinity in the Church, together with the Attendants, to be ſpiritually underſtood; the following Chapters, to the Beginning of the twelfth, give us an emblematical View of the moſt important Emergents in the World, and the Share the Church will have in them, from the Time of the Viſion, till Antichriſt be in the Declenſion.

CHAP. IV.

THIS Chapter repreſents to us the Preſence of the Firſt and Third Perſons of the holy and adorable Trinity in the Church; for the Prophet ranges them in the ſame Order he did *Chap.* i. 3, 4. Where we may notice, 1. The Introduction, to the Middle of *v.* 2. 2. The glorious Majeſty of the Eternal Father, with his Attendants, to *v.* 5. 3. The Emblem of the bleſſed Spirit of all Grace, with his Attendants, to *v.* 8. at the Middle. 4. We have the Exerciſe of theſe two Sorts of Attendants, to the Cloſe.

1 AFter this I looked, and behold, a Door was opened in Heaven; and the first Voice which I heard, was as it were of a Trumpet talking with me, which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee Things which must be hereafter.

2 And immediately I was in the Spirit: ——

In the Introduction we have these Circumstances to notice that made Way for the Vision itself, 1. The Time. 2. The Place. 3. The Voice he heard. And, 4. The Apostle's Frame.

I. There is the Time, *After this I looked*; or rather, after these Things, *viz.* that he had seen and heard in the preceeding three Chapters: And it may be after he had writ the seven several Epistles; but how long after, is not said. Some indeed contend it was the same Day, and immediately upon the Back of the first Vision; yet, I think, we may meet with something in the Text to disprove this. It is said, *Chap.* i. 10. that he was in an *Extasy*, which no Doubt continued with him all the Time of the Vision, and afterwards was interrupted, as is plain from *v.* 2. of this Chapter, where he suddenly is in an Extasy again; and therefore it was not immediately, tho', I am ready to think, it was not very long: But yet it seems, from what is added, to have been some Space; for it is said, *He looked.* He had received a Promise, *Chap.* i. of a Manifestation of Things to come; and having now had one *glorious Vision*, he is looking for more.

II. The Place, *a Door was opened in Heaven.* Some by *Heaven* would have the *Church* to be meant; and by the *opening a Door* there, understand the Revelation of the Will of God in the Scriptures. I shall not refuse but that many Times in Scripture the Church has the Designation of Heaven: But why such a Mystery should be sought for in this Circumstance, I see not; especially that in the first Vision we read of the Place, the Isle *Patmos*, and the Manifestation was there behind him: Now this is above him; and, as he turned to see the first Vision, he must go to Heaven to view this. This is a Place where the Scripture tell us Saints have had many Visions, as *Ezekiel* tells us, *Ezek.* i. 1. *The Heavens were opened, and he saw the Visions of God. John* the *Baptist*, Mat. iii. 16. And *lo, the Heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descend like a Dove. Stephen* said, *Acts* vii. 56. *Behold, I see the Heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the Right-hand of God. Peter* also *saw Heaven opened, and a certain Vessel descending to him*, Acts x. 10. In none of which, never any dream'd, the Militant Church is represented; and here the Visions themselves concern the Church, and so what is seen here, is the *Church*, and not the *Place* where.

Yet does not this remove the Difficulty; for it is not agreed what *Heaven* is here spoken of, whether what the Apostle calls the *third Heaven*, 2 Cor. xii. 2. where he heard and saw what he could not make Words of; or, if it was the inferior Regions of the Air, where Birds fly. I confess, much is said on both Hands, and with great Probability. I hope two Things will be granted here;

1. That God can, yea, has so far elevated the *Organ* of Sight in Man, as enable him to see within the glorious Heavens; this was true of *Stephen*: And so it would be no unsound Gloss, should we allow it to be meant of the third Heaven, the Mansion of Angels, and the Spirits of just Men made perfect; and so good Words should be given these who assert it. But,

2. There are many Things, if not the great Part of them here, are *Figures* and *Emblems* of the *Divine Majesty*, and not the *essential* Glory of God; for there are not Crowns of Gold in Heaven, but Crowns of Glory, nor Lamps, and several other Things mentioned here: And so we are not to doubt but this Representation might have been made even in the lower Heavens, tho' still, I am inclinable to think, *John* had the Manifestation above that, and the rather he could discover nothing till he was *in the Spirit*, but the first Voice.

As for a *Door opening*, there seems little Difficulty in it, for it is of the same Signification with *Heaven opened* in the former Texts: It was an easy Thing for God to order a *Gap* or Rent in the Clouds to admit the Apostle's View, that he might have a Foretaste with the naked Eye, of what he was afterwards to see more fully in an extatick Manner.

III. The next Circumstance is the *Voice*, concerning which we have several Things said in the Text, which we shall notice particularly. As,

1. It is called the *first Voice.* We read indeed of several Voices in this Vision, and this Voice was distinct from them all, and the *first* in Order too; yet it would do better to translate this *former*, and not first; and so it is that same Voice he heard before, *Chap.*

i. 10. ſo that it was really the *Voice of Chriſt*, and he gives it the ſame Deſignation, *like a Trumpet*; of which above.

3. The next Thing about this Voice is, a Call to him, *Come up hither*, i. e. to *Heaven*, which he ſaw opened. Some tell us, Heaven is not mentioned here; And beſides, How could *John* aſcend up to Heaven? To remove this Shadow of a Difficulty, we have no more to do, but caſt our Eyes to the ſecond Verſe, where we find him in the Spirit; and ſo his Motion might be like *Paul*'s, i. e. be caught up to Heaven: And, tho' it is not ſaid, either that the Voice was from Heaven, or he was called to go up to Heaven, yet there was a Door opened in Heaven, and the Call is, Aſcend, or *Come up hither*; which ſeems to be the beſt and moſt natural Senſe we can have of it.

3. This Voice makes a Promiſe to *John*, *And I will ſhew thee Things which muſt be hereafter*. This is the Deſign of the Call; we had this Clauſe, *Chap.* i. 1. It ſeems induſtriouſly to be repeated, to declare, that the Contents of this Viſion are intirely *Prophetical*, yet not ſo, as if no Part of theſe Things were already begun; for we will find, that two of the Seals were begun before this *Revelation*, but not ended, nay, nor, near an End; and ſo the Denomination may be taken from the greater Part. But there is this certain Concluſion from this Promiſe, that no Part of this can belong to the Old Teſtament Diſpenſation, all of it appertains to the Goſpel-OEconomy.

IV. We have his Frame, *Immediately I was in the Spirit*. There was no Time given him to deliberate how he ſhould mount Heaven, but inſtantly he was in that Condition we ſpoke of, *Chap.* i. 10. which, as I noted before, plainly ſays there was an Interval betwixt theſe two Extaſies, to be ſure, as much as would allow him to write the former Seven Epiſtles.

2 —— And behold, a Throne was ſet in Heaven, and One ſat on the Throne.

3 And he that ſat, was to look upon like a Jaſper, and a Sardine-ſtone: And there was a Rain-bow round about the Throne, in Sight like unto an Emerald.

4 And round about the Throne were four and twenty Seats: And upon the Seats I ſaw four and twenty Elders ſitting, clothed in white Raiment, and they had on their Heads Crowns of Gold.

5 And out of the Throne proceeded Lightnings, and Thundrings, and Voices: ——

In this is, 1. A Throne of Majeſty, *v.* 2. 2. The Poſſeſſor thereof, *v.* 2, 3. 3. His Attendants, *v.* 4. 4. The Emblems of his glorious Juſtice, *v.* 5.

I. There is a Throne of Majeſty, *And behold, a Throne was ſet in Heaven.* When a Throne is aſcribed to God, it is with Alluſion to earthly Kings; for Heaven is incapable of ſuch material Things, nor could any Throne be capable to contain God, and ſo the whole Heavens are called his *Throne*: Yet this Account of it in the Text, caſts up to us theſe few Things;

1. This Glory was very conſpicuous to *John*, now put in a Trim to behold it. And he tells us it was ſurpriſingly auguſt, and therefore he uſhers it in with a *Behold*. *Daniel* ſays, *Dan.* vii. 9. *His Throne was like the fiery Flame.* So that it is an awful and terrible Throne.

2. This Throne was *ſet*, or well and orderly fixed; as the Word ſignifies, it was firmly fixed and ſtable; all other Thrones are tottering, and tumble down at Length.

3. It was ſet *in Heaven*, above the Reach of Men and Devils; yea, while it is ſaid to be there, it ſhews that this Throne is Paramount to all other Thrones, all other Thrones being but Footſtools to this, and muſt be accountable thereto; from this Throne both Mercy and Juſtice are diſtributed.

II. We have the *Poſſeſſor* of this *Throne* deſcribed to us: But we would note, before we come to the Particulars, *John* gives him neither *Name*, nor *Appearance of Shape*, further than to tell us, *Chap.* v. 1. of his Right-hand. This is the rather to be minded, that in all the Manifeſtations God ever made of himſelf, there was never any Form or Shape that he aſſumed to himſelf, on Purpoſe to divert his People from *Idolatry*. It may be queſtioned, who is this that ſat on the Throne? It is not worth the noticing what *Hammond* the great Epiſcopal Doctor ſays, when, rather than his Biſhop of *Jeruſalem* ſhould want a *Throne*, he'll give him God's. A great many are of the Mind that Chriſt the *Mediator* is the *Poſſeſſor* of this *Throne*; but then the Difficulty will be, how

the

the *Lamb* can in any Propriety of Speech be ſaid to receive the Book out of his own Hand. Others again ſay, The whole glorious *Trinity* is the *Sitter*: But then, we will find the *Son* and the *Holy Ghoſt* twice mentioned, once here, and once afterwards, *v.* 5. and the *Son*, *Chap.* v. 6. which is unworthy of that Order found always in the Divine Oracles, except when our own Ignorance blinds us that we cannot ſee it. Beſides, this Opinion is hampered with the ſame Difficulties as the former, for then Chriſt muſt come and take the Book out of his own Right-hand; and therefore it ſeems more agreeable to the Scope of the Place, we underſtand this of the *Father* or *firſt Perſon* of the ever glorious *Trinity*, whom we are now to view as repreſented in the Text.

1. He is moſt ſimple, and therefore called *One*: It is true, *One* is not in the Original, but the *Sitter*. But that being twice read, and once with the prefixed Particle, and in the *ſingular* Number, puts it out of Doubt that it is underſtood, he is not only *One* in Number, but One alſo in Poſſeſſion: Other Thrones have a Succeſſion, either of the ſame or different Races, but he continues to be *One*, and is for ever poſſeſſed of that Throne.

2. It is ſaid, he *ſits* upon this Throne, which denotes a continued Exerciſe of his Government: He is the neceſſary Supporter and Ruler of all his Creatures, who could not ſubſiſt for the ſhorteſt While, did he withdraw his upholding Power; without which, the whole Creation would drop back into its primitive Nothing.

3. There is his Appearance, *v.* 3. without any Shape, as was ſaid: So that this does not ſhew what he is in himſelf, but what he appears to be; for we cannot further know him than he is pleaſed to reveal himſelf: And therefore *John* ſays, *He was to look upon like.* And here he is repreſented by three borrowed Expreſſions, which exhibite a great many of the Divine Perfections, and perhaps the moſt of them found in Scripture, were not our Underſtandings dull, that we cannot inveſtigate the Truth by the Emblem.

(1.) He is repreſented by a *Jaſper*, a *Stone* of great Value, and was one of theſe in *Aaron's Breaſt-plate*, Exod. xxviii. 20. It is the firſt in Order and Dignity in the Foundation of the New *Jeruſalem*, *Rev.* xxi. 19. Naturaliſts tell us, It is very tranſparant, of a great Variety of Colours, all beautiful Greens; and is an excellent *Amulet* or Preſervative againſt the moſt noxious Poiſons: Theſe may bring to our Mind the ſpotleſs *Purity* of God, his manifold *Excellencies*, which never wax old, for he continues the ſame for ever and ever; and the Security and Safety of theſe poſſeſt of him. But no one precious Stone is able to repreſent him, and therefore he adds another.

(2.) He is repreſented by a *Sardine*, which is alſo of very great Value, and had a Room in the High Prieſt's *Breaſt-plate*, and in the Foundations of the *New Jeruſalem*. It is ſaid to be of a bloody or Fleſh-red Colour; which may point out the *holy Juſtice of God*, and fill with Awe and Fear all that approach him.

(3.) He is ſaid to be encircled with a *Rain-bow round about the Throne, in Sight like unto an Emerald*: This Stone was alſo in *Aaron's* Breaſt-plate. This *Smaragdus* is one of the moſt beautiful amongſt the precious Stones, of a pure green Colour, which neither the bright Rays of the Sun nor Darkneſs can alter, but it is ſtill radiant: It is reported to cure ſore Eyes by looking at it. Nor is there great Difficulty to compare the *Rain-bow* to this *green* Stone, ſeeing Green is uſually the predominant Colour in the *Rain-bow*; and this may be adduced only to repreſent that one Colour. We read of the Rain-bow often in Scripture: *Ezekiel*, in his Viſion, *ſaw as the Appearance of the Bow in the Day of Rain*, Ezek. i. 28. And *John ſaw a mighty Angel come down from Heaven clothed with a Cloud, and a Rain-bow was upon his Head*, Rev. x. 1. We know that the Rain-bow was a Sign of God's Covenant with *Noah*, Gen. ix. 13. and ſo it is an Emblem of God's *Faithfulneſs*: And the diſtinguiſhing this *Rain-bow* from the other, which God gave as a Security againſt a ſecond Deluge, ſhews that greater Expectations may be had from the Covenant of Grace, whereof this ſeems to be a Sign.

III. There is the Deſcription of the Attendants about this great Throne, *v.* 4. All are agreed that this is the moſt difficult Part of this Viſion; and that upon the Knowledge thereof, depends the right View of ſeveral Parts of the Prophecy. To take down the ſeveral Senſes given hereof by the Learned, and examine them, would be tedious, and not very profitable: And therefore I ſhall premiſe a few Things may clear the Meaning of theſe Attendants, and be of Uſe in the Inveſtigation of ſeveral Things mentioned in this Chapter.

Premiſe 1ſt, In all this Prophecy, and eſpecially in this Viſion, there is a great Affinity betwixt the Terms thereof, and theſe Terms of Divine Authority under the Old Teſtament Diſpenſation. This, as far as I know, none denies, but ſuch as would borrow them from Heathens, the ſworn Enemies of the Croſs of Chriſt; and therefore I

ſhall little regard them: But yet I would a little eſtabliſh this. We find here an early Eye that Way, for the Throne of God ſeems to allude to the *Mercy-Seat*, which was, in the moſt proper Senſe, God's Throne among the *Jews*; yet, I own, this is the moſt faint and dark among them: Only, I am confident, nothing, with better Grounds, can be put in its Room. Next, we have here an Alluſion to the *Elders* among the *Jews*; and this Character is much older than the Word *Jews*. After that, we have an Alluſion to the *Candleſtick*, which was *to burn always before the Teſtimony*, Exod. xxvii. 20. Again, to the *Braſen Sea*, in which *the Prieſts were to waſh*. This is called a *Molten Sea*, 1 Kings vii. 8. and a *Laver*, Exod. xxxviii. 8. And elſewhere, we have many other Alluſions. As to the *Incenſe Altar*, of which we read, *Rev.* viii. 3. and to the *Great Altar of Burnt-offerings*, Chap. ix. 13. And in many other Places, *Exod.* xxx. 1. we have the Names of the legal Inſtruments, as *Cenſers*, *Incenſe*, &c. all which do ſufficiently juſtify this Propoſition.

Premiſe 2d, All theſe Shadows under the Law did figure Chriſt, and his Church which was to come; and therefore the Apoſtle ſays, *Col.* ii. 17. *They were Shadows of Things to come.* And this Viſion which *John* was honoured with, is for the ſame End, as we ſee in the Beginning of this Chapter, where the Voice told him he was to *ſee Things to fall out hereafter.* And that this has no (at leaſt little) Alluſion to the *triumphant* State of the Church, the 10. *v.* of *Chap.* v. declares, *We ſhall reign on the Earth.* Again, I hope it will not be refuſed, this Viſion, in all its Parts, is deſigned for the Comfort, as well as the Inſtruction of the Militant Church; elſe I would fain know what was the Deſign thereof. Now, tho', upon the Apoſtle's Relation, it might be very comfortable for Saints below, to underſtand how theſe above were entertained; yet, to be ſure, it is more comfortable to know what Care God takes of his poor ſuffering Servants: Beſides, none can ſay this contains an Emblem of the Joys above, for theſe are in Part repreſented in the Promiſes of the ſeveral Epiſtles; and therefore I look upon this, at leaſt, as a probable Reaſon, the Contents of this Viſion concern the Church on Earth.

Premiſe 3d, That all the Attendants, here mentioned, are the myſtical Members of Jeſus Chriſt: This is indiſputable from *Chap.* v. 8, 9. *The four Beaſts, and the four and twenty Elders fell down before the Lamb,* and ſay, *Thou haſt redeemed us to God by thy Blood.* Nor do I ſee any Reaſon why theſe may not be preſumed to belong to the Militant Church; tho', as far as I ſee, it is not expreſly ſaid: But this I may aver, that the Triumphant Church has neither need of Elders or living Creatures, ſuch as are here deſcribed; as will be plain, when we conſider who they are, in due Time. There is yet another Argument in the Context: We find all the Worſhippers in this Viſion mentioned under the Deſignation of *Elders* or *Living Creatures*; and to exclude the Saints on Earth from a Share of this Honour, ſeems to be very hard, ſeeing their Praiſe is all that can be expected from them while they are in this ſublunary State.

Premiſe 4th, Theſe Emblems of Elders and Living Creatures ſeem to comprehend the whole Church of Chriſt upon Earth, nor ſhall I exclude the Bleſſed above. To juſtify this, there is not only the Suffrages of the moſt valuable Expoſitors of this obſcure Piece of Scripture, but ſomething from the Context that looks this Way, *Chap.* v. 9. *Thou haſt redeemed us out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People:* Which, One would think, ſhould comprehend the whole *Ranſomed* of the Lord, eſpecially on Earth; becauſe it is added in the next Verſe, *And we ſhall reign on the Earth.*

We are now to view theſe Attendants mentioned *v.* 4. Where I ſhall notice, 1. Their Seats. 2. Themſelves. 3. Their Poſture. 4. Their Apparel.

1. We have here, as *v.* 2. the Seat ſet before the Sitter, which Order I think ſafeſt to follow, *Round about the Throne were four and twenty Seats*; or, as it ſhould be rendered, *Round about the Throne were four and twenty Thrones.* I cannot excuſe our Tranſlators this Eſcape; for the Words being the ſame in the Original, ſhould had the ſame Word in the Verſion: Nor will it excuſe, that becauſe the Seat where God is ſaid to *ſit* is called *a Throne*, it was reaſonable to aſſign another Deſignation to the Places of Creatures, as to be ſure theſe were; For, if the *Spirit of God* had ſeen it meet to diſtinguiſh them, it was eaſy to have done it in the *Greek*, which is a much more copious Language than ours: And beſides, the Seat of the moſt High is not called a Throne to diſtinguiſh it from other Thrones, but with Alluſion to them. I ſhall view, 1. Their Deſignation, *Thrones.* 2. Their Poſition, *Round about the Throne*; and wave their Number till I come to the *Elders.*

(1.) Their Deſignation, *Thrones.* This is the proper Deſignation of a *Royal Seat*; and I can challenge any to ſhew where it is taken otherwiſe throughout the Scripture, and it is the moſt common Senſe of it in all other Languages. And ſo, while we read firſt of *one* Throne as the greateſt, and four and twenty other *Thrones*, whoſe Poſſeſſors

ſors do Homage to him that ſits on the one Throne; it plainly ſays, The firſt is *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, the peculiar Name and Deſignation of God.

(2.) The Poſture of theſe Thrones, They were *round about the Throne.* Some tell us they were before it; but when we conſider God has no Back, and here they are ſaid to encircle it, I think we ſhould give the Phraſe its fulleſt Meaning, and ſo they were Eaſt, Weſt, South and North. Beſides, the Expreſſion ſays, Theſe Thrones were to be directed by, and diſpoſed of, according to the Mind of the Sitter on that *one* Throne.

2. We have the Sitters upon theſe Thrones: Where we are to view, 1. Their Character, *Elders.* And, 2. Their Number, *Twenty four.*

(1.) The Character of the Poſſeſſors of theſe Thrones, *Elders. Hamond* tells us merrily, They were the *Presbyters* of *Jeruſalem*: But then he is afraid to beſtow *Thrones* upon *Presbyters*, which he tells us is an upſtart Office in the Church; and therefore he makes them the *Biſhops* of *Judea* meeting in Council, with their *Metropolitan* of *Jeruſalem*; and converts the Crowns to Mitres: But I wonder he did not turn the white Raiments into Lawn-ſleeves, unleſs he was afraid that diſtinguiſhing Garb might ſometime be deſigned a Surplice; for in the End of his *Annotations*, he knows not whether to make them *Biſhops* or *Presbyters.* Many others take them for *Rulers* of the *Church*, and ſome for *Angels*: All which I think equally diſtant from the Truth, which I ſhall endeavour to clear, by expiſcating the Meaning of this Character from the *Old Teſtament* Diſpenſation; which, according to the firſt Thing premiſed, muſt let us into the true Senſe of the Things meant thereby. It is true, in the New Teſtament, we have often the Term *Elders* applied to Church-officers, as ſuch; yet in the Old, to which we are to have ſpecial Regard here, I cannot meet with one ſingle Place where it is ſo taken. I own we meet with *Elders of the Prieſts*, 2 Kings xix. 2, *Iſa.* xxxvii. 2. But then we are to underſtand them of the more ancient and experienced of the Prieſts, or elſe they were the Chief of the ſeveral Orders; and ſo it will not be a Deſignation competent to Church-officers, as ſuch: And ſo we muſt quit the Tribe of *Levi* to find out the Meaning of this Word; which we no ſooner do, than immediately we find a great many come under this Denomination: For the *Iſraelites* had *Elders* while they were in *Egypt*, Exod. iii. 16. but what was their Office, or how they came by it (only it ſeems they had a Sort of Superiority over the reſt) we know not. We find indeed that *Moſes* made choice of able Men, and *made them Rulers and Heads of* Iſrael, *Exod.* xviii. 25, &c. of which ſome were over Thouſands, ſome our Hundreds, *&c.* But then the Number of theſe muſt be very great, and all of them were for Civil Caſes, and had no Concern with the Prieſthood. We find further the Lord ordering *Moſes* to bring up *Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and ſeventy of the Elders of Iſrael*, Exod. xxiv. 1. Whence it is plain there were more *Elders* than Seventy in *Iſrael*; and that they were not Prieſts, but probably of theſe Rulers before-mentioned, and ſo belonged to the other Tribes, and not to that of *Levi.* Again, we read *of a Man taken out of every Tribe*, who is deſigned *Head of the Houſe of his Father*, Numb. i. 4. Here indeed they have a Divine Deſignation, yet the Tribe of *Levi* has none in this Number, who made Twelve without it. The Time of their Election is notable, when the twelve Tribes were numbred; and they are called *Captains*, Numb. ii. or Generals of their ſeveral *Tribes*: And when the Tabernacle was reared up, they are deſigned *Princes of* Iſrael, *Heads of the Houſes of their Fathers*, Numb. vii. and often *Elders.* They were allowed of God, as Repreſentatives of the ſeveral Tribes over which the Lord had made them Captains; as is evident from this, that their Offerings were accepted in lieu of the Tribes they did repreſent: For there were but twelve Offerings according to the twelve Tribes, which had each a Prince or Head over them, at the Dedication of the Tabernacle. This I take to be the Meaning of *Elders* in this Place, *viz.* that they ſignify ſecular Powers or Princes, who ſhould come in to Chriſt's ſpiritual Kingdom, and imploy their Power for the Promotion of it; and that they are to be lookt upon as the Repreſentatives of their ſeveral Kingdoms and Principalities. The Grounds of this will caſt up in the reſt of the Verſe.

(2.) Their Number, *Twenty four.* It is certain there were not ſo many of theſe great Elders in *Iſrael*, and of ordinary Elders there were a great deal more; ſo that none of theſe will ſerve our Turn: Nor do I think that to ſay a Definite is here put for an Indefinite, will ſolve the Difficulty; for it is rather to ſhift than anſwer: As little will theſe Courſes of the Prieſts, eſtabliſhed by *David*, 1 Chron. xxv. anſwer the Deſign, as is evident from the Meaning of the Word *Elders.* I ſhall only add, that here the *Holy Ghoſt* is pointing at the Increaſe of *Chriſt's Kingdom* above that of the *Jewiſh*: This will be plainer afterwards; and that, inſtead of Twelve, there will be Four and twenty.

3. Their Poſture, they *ſit*. This ſhews the Exerciſe of their Power, and that they lay out themſelves for the Glory of him that *ſits* upon the *Great Throne*.

4. Their Apparel, which is of two Pieces, *White Raiment*, and *Golden Crowns*. The firſt adorns the whole Body, of which we gave the Senſe, *Chap.* iii. 18. The other adorns the Head, and is an Emblem of Majeſty, no Sign they were *Rulers* of the Church, of whatever Denomination.

IV. The Emblems of his glorious Juſtice, *v.* 5. *And out of the Throne proceeded Lightnings, and Thundrings, and Voices.* No doubt this alludes to the Promulgation of the Law, *Exod.* xx. 18. where *theſe three* are expreſly mentioned; only here it has *Voices*, 'tis *Voice* there. Tho' the Goſpel be full of Sweetneſs to allure, yet it wants not Terror to affright; and therefore the Church of God is ſaid to *be terrible like an Army with Banners*, Song vi. 4. which may be meant of the terrible *Threatnings* of the Goſpel; with this Difference, That under the Law they were not ſo clear and diſtinct as under the Goſpel. Whatever the *Antinomians* ſay, the *Apoſtle, from his own Senſe of the Terror of the Lord, did perſwade Men*, 1 Cor. v. 11. The Goſpel has in it what may overawe the greateſt and moſt ſtout-hearted.

5 ——And there were ſeven Lamps of Fire burning before the Throne, which are the ſeven Spirits of God.

6 And before the Throne *there was* a Sea of Glaſs like unto Cryſtal: And in the Midſt of the Throne, and round about the Throne, *were* four Beaſts full of Eyes before and behind.

7 And the firſt Beaſt was like a Lion, and the ſecond Beaſt like a Calf, and the third Beaſt had a Face as a Man, and the fourth Beaſt *was* like a flying Eagle.

8 And the four Beaſts had each of them ſix Wings about him, and they were full of Eyes within: ——

In this, we have a glorious Emblem of the efficacious Workings of the *Holy Ghoſt* in his Church: Where we have, 1. The Emblem of the Holy Ghoſt himſelf. 2. Of his general Influence. 3. Of his ſpecial Attendants.

I. We have the *Emblem* of the *Holy Ghoſt*, v. 5. where we ſhall view, 1. The Emblem. 2. The Interpretation thereof.

1. We have the Emblem, 1. Expreſt. 2. Diſtinguiſhed. 3. Its Poſture noted.

(1.) The Emblem itſelf, *Seven Lamps*. We read many a Time of *Lamps* in Scripture, and ſometimes as they are Evidences of the *Divine Preſence*: So, when God covenanted with *Abraham*, and this was ſealed on *Abraham's* Part by a Sacrifice, the Emblem of *God's Preſence* and *Conſent* is repreſented by a *burning Lamp paſſing thorow between the Pieces of the divided Sacrifice*, Gen. xv. 17. This is alſo with Alluſion to the *Lamps*, which, by the Command of God, were to *burn always before the Teſtimony*, Exod. xx. 21. which no doubt was a Type of the Influence of the *Holy Ghoſt*, to tell us all the Light and Heat in God's Sanctuary is owing to him. But further, in the Scripture, we find *Comfort* repreſented by a *Lamp*, Prov. xiii. 9. *The Lamp of the Wicked ſhall be put out.* And finally, a *Lamp* ſignifies *Direction*: So ſays *David*, Pſal. cxix. 105. *The Word of the Lord is a Lamp unto my Paths:* And we know that all Believers are *led of the Spirit*. But here he is preſented to us under the Emblem of *Seven Lamps*: This may bear Alluſion unto the *Seven Churches*, to whom Chriſt had ſent Letters; and to aſſure us of the manifold Grace he diſpenſes to the Church, whom he enlightneth, quickneth, healeth, ſtrengthneth, and comforteth.

(2.) This Emblem is diſtinguiſhed from all others, and therefore they are ſaid to be Lamps of *burning Fire*. This was an Emblem to *Daniel* of the Eyes of God, which appeared to him as *Lamps of Fire*, Dan. x. 6. This ſhews us theſe, among other Perfections of the *Holy Spirit*, in his Operation, 1. That he *penetrates*, for he *ſearcheth even the deep Things of God*. 2. He *trieth*, and knoweth exactly what is real from what is apparent. 3. He *purgeth*, which is his ſpecial Work in Regeneration, purging out the old Leaven of Nature. 4. He *kindles* Divine Love and Zeal in the Hearts of God's People. 5. He *ſcatters* and diſpels all Fogues and Miſts raiſed by Satan's Temptations. 6. He *directs*, as is ſaid before.

(3.) The Poſture of theſe Lamps, *Before the Throne*: For the Reaſons given above, *Chap.* i. 4.

2. The

2. The Interpretation of this Emblem, *Which are the ſeven Spirits of God*: Of which we ſpoke alſo above. Here I only notice how groundleſs the Conceit of *Grotius* and *Hamond* is, That theſe repreſent the *Seven Deacons* of *Jeruſalem*. Their Opinion is more tolerable, who would have them to reſpect the *Seven Periods* of the Church, if they had Reaſons to ſupport the main *Hypotheſis*, that there are really ſeven ſeveral Periods deſigned in this Prophecy.

II. The Emblem of his *general Influence*, or rather that wherefore he is pleaſed thus to exert himſelf, *v.* 6. and is alſo that for which the Father is prevailed with to ſend forth his *Holy Spirit*, like *Seven Lamps of Fire*; this Emblem is a *Sea of Glaſs*, where we are to notice, 1. Its Deſignation. 2. Its Excellency. 3. Its Situation.

1. The Deſignation of this Emblem, *A Sea of Glaſs*. There are a vaſt Number of different Opinions about this; but as they are for the moſt Part Conceits, without one Scripture given to ſupport them, they will need as few Reaſons to overturn them. I ſhall therefore go in with the Opinion of the more ſound Expoſitors. It ſeems plainly to be an Alluſion to that *Laver* God ordered *Moſes* to make for waſhing in, *Exod.* xxx. 18. which alſo was followed in the Temple by *Solomon*, and, becauſe of its greater Capacity, was called a *Sea*, 1 Kings vii. 23. here the Prieſts were to waſh their Hands and their Feet, before they went in to miniſter before the Lord. It is true, 'tis ſaid in both Places, that the *Laver* and the *Sea* was made of *Braſs*, but this is of *Glaſs*. This Difficulty will alſo be ſoon over, if we conſider that the Mirrors of old were made of Braſs: *Moſes* tells us, *Exod.* xxxviii. 8. that *he made the Laver of Braſs*; and to ſhew us what Sort of Braſs it was, he adds, *of the Looking-glaſſes of the Women*; ſo that it ſeems he melted down as many of their *Dreſſing-Mirrors* as were ſufficient. This is plainly an Emblem of the Blood of Chriſt, the true Laver, and which can only waſh away all Spots, from both the People of God, and their Performances. It is well added here, becauſe it was the *Blood of Chriſt* that purchaſed the Spirit, and he purifies none but theſe whom God juſtifies for the Sake of the Blood of Chriſt.

2. The Excellency of this Sea, *Like unto Cryſtal*, i. e. beautiful and tranſparent, and without Spot, which alſo ſhews how fit an Emblem it is of the *Blood* of Chriſt; and beſides, Cryſtal is very durable, ſo is the *Blood* of Chriſt.

3. The Situation of this Sea, *Before the Throne*, as a Memorial of the Satisfaction of Chriſt, and alſo for the Uſe of both the *Elders*, and *Living Creatures*, all whoſe Performances muſt be dipp'd in this *Laver*, before they be acceptable unto the Father of Spirits.

III. We have theſe who attend upon the *Holy Spirit*, and who are alſo very near the Throne, *v.* 6, 7. where we are to view, 1. Their Situation. 2. Their Deſignation. 3. Their Difference from one another. 4. Their Conformity to one another.

1. Their Situation, *In the Midſt of the Throne, and round about the Throne*. This has perplexed the Learned very much; ſome think they were below the Throne, like *Solomon's* Oxen, as Supporters; ſome, they were upon the Steps of the Throne: But, if we turn the Words a little cloſſer, it may be eaſier to attain the Senſe of them, *In the Midſt of the Throne, and in the Circuit of the Throne*; Whereas it is ſaid of the Elders, that they *ſurrounded the Throne*. Now, this *Circuit* ſignifies a Space next to any Thing, and this Space might be betwixt the *great Throne* and the *four and twenty Thrones*: And then, in the Midſt of the Throne, points out the Midſt of that Space before the Throne, under the ſeven Lamps, and beſide the Sea of Glaſs. And ſo theſe Creatures were ready to receive Orders from him that ſits on the Throne, Direction and Aſſiſtance from the Lamps, and Fitneſs from the Laver.

2. Their Deſignation or general Deſcription, *Four Beaſts full of Eyes before and behind*. Where we have to view,

(1.) Their general Character, *Beaſts*, in our Tranſlation: But truly, and according to the Senſe of the Word ζῶα, *Living Creatures*. To be ſure, they are not Beaſts in a proper Senſe, becauſe one of them is like a Man, and another like an Eagle; ſo that the Name *Beaſt* cannot be affirmed of two of them, and therefore it will be nearer to the Original, to deſign them *Living Creatures*. But the great Queſtion is, Who theſe Living Creatures repreſent? There are a great many various Opinions concerning the Truth of this Type we encline not to meddle with: One that has the moſt Suffrages, is, that by them we are to mean Angels; The great Argument they bring to ſupport this is, the living Creatures we read of in *Ezekiel's* Viſion, *Ezek.* i. 5, 10. betwixt which and theſe they reckon a great Reſemblance: And theſe living Creatures, which *Ezekiel* ſaw, are called expreſly *Cherubims*, *Ezek.* x. 10. Yet even this Argument will not be ſo ſtrong as is imagined; for theſe *Cherubims* were not Angels, for Angels are pure Spirits: And to ſay, as a great many do, that Angels were employed of God to make theſe Repreſentations, yet ſtill they were but Emblems themſelves, and not the

Truth of what they repreſented; nor indeed is it agreed what theſe *Cherubims* did repreſent, whether the Office of Angels imployed about the Church, or the Work of ſome other Inſtruments in God's Hand. That *Angels* are imployed by the *Mediator*, we cannot doubt: But that they and their Work ſhould be emblematically repreſented to the Church, I ſee no Reaſon. Nay, how ſhould theſe *inviſible* Agents in their Work be repreſented by *viſible* Figures? It is enough for us to know they are imployed, and work cheerfully, as we know they do, being *ſent forth to miniſter unto them that are Heirs of eternal Life*: But all this While, we cannot conceive of their Actings further than from the Effect, after the Word of Revelation. Can any tell how they ſlew the Firſt-born of *Egypt*? how they deſtroyed the *Philiſtines* Army? how they ſmote of the *Iſraelites* 70000 Men? Yet we know from Scripture, that *Angels* did all theſe Things. Yea, is it not more reaſonable to believe, that by the Prophet's *Cherubims*, were figured the Providence of God uſing what Tools he pleaſed to bring about his great Work; which the moſt conſiderate are of the Mind of. The other Reaſon they bring is, Becauſe the *Living Creatures* are often mentioned before the Elders, and are employed in the moſt material Diſcoveries in this Prophecy; as, that one of them called *John to come and ſee*, Rev. vi. 1. when the firſt Seal was opened; that another of them gave the *Vials* of God's Wrath into the Hands of the Angels, who were to pour them out, *Rev.* xv. 7. But, when all is laid together, it only concludes, that God had employed a delegate Number of Angels to give our Prophet an enigmatical View of the moſt remarkable Providences ſhould befal the Church and her Enemies, and that every Angel had his particular Task or Part in this Repreſentation; while, in the mean Time, they were but Emblems themſelves, appearing ſo or ſo, as might beſt point out the Thing, yet are they not to be the Executers of theſe Things themſelves; and ſo the Truth muſt differ from its Type. Nay, theſe who are ſo ſtiff in this Point own, That the Angels who poured out the *Vials* in the Viſion, were but Emblems of the real Agents, and that *Babylon* is not to fall by the Miniſtry of Angels, and of Conſequence ſome other than Angels are to be repreſented by, and under the Emblem of the *Living Creatures*. And it is as reaſonable they belong to the Church, which I think very certain from the next Chapter, *v.* 8, 9. where they join with the Elders in that new Song, yea, and as it were precent to them; and in this Song one of the *Stanza*'s is, *Thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us by thy Blood to God, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation, and haſt made us unto our God Kings and Prieſts, and we ſhall reign on the Earth.* And, to fortify this, it is to be minded, there are no other Quiriſters that ſing this Song, but theſe two; and conſequently theſe two muſt repreſent the whole Church of God. And therefore, I am truly of the Mind of a great many ſolid Expoſitors, that, by the *Living Creatures*, we are to underſtand the *Miniſters of the Goſpel*; and it comes ſeaſonably in here, after mentioning the Civil Powers: And, when it ſhall pleaſe God to unite theſe two together, and both to the Truth, we may then flatter ourſelves with a bleſſed Turn of Affairs. And we will find, whatever is ſaid of theſe *Living Creatures*, are moſt excellent Accompliſhments in Goſpel-miniſters: But what is to ſay, will give more Light in this.

(2.) Their Number, *Four*. This ſome apply to the Evangeliſts, and ſo they uſe to paint them with one of theſe Emblems at each of them. But then, *John* was one them himſelf, and there could be but three beſides; or, there muſt be four in Types, and one in Perſon. Some ſay, They repreſent four ſeveral Sorts of *Goſpel-miniſters*, to ſucceed one another to the End of the World. Others ſay, They are four, with Alluſion to the four cardinal Points of the Earth. But, paſſing all theſe as too uncertain, we may allow them all to be Emblems of a faithful Goſpel-miniſtry in all Ages; tho' it is probable, in ſome Centuries there may be more of one Nature than another. That which I take to be further contain'd here is, the Increaſe of Goſpel-miniſters above theſe under the Old Teſtament: As the twenty four Elders did repreſent the doubling the Number of Goſpel-hearers above theſe under the Law, and then there was only one Tribe devoted to the Temple-ſervice; but in the New Diſpenſation there will be four Times as many, as the Pſalmiſt ſays, *Pſal.* lxviii. 11. *Great was the Company of theſe that publiſhed it.*

(3.) Their Capacities for their Work; *Full of Eyes before and behind.* Eyes in Scripture point out Counſel and Watchfulneſs; So *Moſes* ſaid to his Father-in-law, *Numb.* x. 31. *Thou mayeſt be to us inſtead of Eyes*, i. e. A Counſellor. And again, we read, *Pſal.* xxxii. 8. *I will guide thee with mine Eye*, i. e. After a moſt watchful Manner. The Prophets, whom God ſent unto his People, were for theſe Reaſons called *Seers*, as 1 *Sam.* ix. 9. *He that is now called a Prophet, was before-time called a Seer.* In this Expreſſion is to be noticed the great Growth and Increaſe of this Capacity, under the Goſpel, above what was under the Law. As, 1. *They are full of Eyes*; this points at the great Endowments of Goſpel-miniſters; and ſo he promiſed to pour out his Spirit upon

upon all Ranks and Ages. 2. They *had Eyes before.* This points at their Dependence upon God, and Prudence in the Exerciſe of their Work. 3. They had *Eyes behind;* Which repreſents their Care and Watchfulneſs: They are not blind, like the ignorant and careleſs *Phariſees*, Mat. xv. 14. whom Chriſt reproves.

3. We have the Way how the Living Creatures differ from one another, *v.* 7. Some, by this Diverſity of Forms, underſtand the *different Excellencies* of *Goſpel-miniſters*, in four ſeveral Periods of the World, (ſo that theſe have only four Periods, inſtead of ſeven) each of which is to ſucceed another. I name them, becauſe they are curious, and perhaps not without Truth, tho' not in their Senſe: The *1ſt* Period is repreſented by the *Face of a Lion*; which, they imagine, does expreſs the firſt Goſpel-miniſtry, whoſe Courage was undauntoned, and, in Spite of all Oppoſition, puſh'd their Way, the full Gale of the Spirit being with them. The *2d* is repreſented by *the Face of a Calf*; by which they would decypher the Nature of theſe Miniſters who flouriſhed, when the Liberty of the Church was much ſtraitned under the Yoke of *Antichriſt*, wherein they were much burdened, and heavily exerciſed, yet diſcovered great Patience and Tameneſs. The *3d* is referred to the Time of the Reformation from Popery, which they think begun with *Luther*, and is repreſented by the *Face of a Man*, who would no longer drudge under theſe heavy Burdens, but, after a Maſculine Manner, fought their Way out of the ſame; which they think is not ended, for there will be for ſome Time a great Struggle before the Church be extricate out of theſe Difficulties. The *4th* is repreſented by *a flying Eagle*; this they believe is to be accompliſhed when Chriſt's Standard-Royal ſhall be diſplayed, and both the *Jews* and *Gentiles* ſhall be gathered thereunto, that then there will be a notable and Eagle-eyed Miniſtry, which ſhall ſoar aloft; and the Sublimity of the Doctrine, and Purity of their Lives, ſhall keep Pace together.

Others, by the four different Repreſentations, underſtand the ſeveral Qualifications every Goſpel-miniſter ſhould be endowed with, as the *Courage* of a Lion, the *Tameneſs* and Patience of a Calf, the *Prudence* of a Man, and the *perſpicacious Inſight* into the Myſteries of Salvation, repreſented by the Eye and Wing of an Eagle. Which alſo they think is plainly repreſented by the *Cherubim* in *Ezekiel* i. 10. which there ſome apply to *Angels*. It is plain, tho' there may be an Alluſion to *Ezekiel's Living Creatures*, yet there is no Identity, by comparing the Places; for there every one of the four Living Creatures is ſaid to have all the four Repreſentations in this Text, but here every one has a different *Appearance*: And therefore I rather incline to join theſe, who think theſe four *Aſpects* ſhew *the different Diſpoſitions of Miniſters*, in all Ages of the Church, God uſing their ſeveral Tempers for Edification: So, we find *Joſes* was deſigned *Barnabas*, *Acts* iv. 36. *i. e.* A Son of Conſolation. Juſt ſo, *James* and *John*, the Sons of *Zebedee*, are called *Sons of Thunder*, Mark iii. 17. Now, if we may underſtand it thus, which I ſee no Reaſon againſt, even tho' the firſt be true, we ſhall ſee however different the *Tempers* of Miniſters are, yet all of them may be ſpecially ſerviceable to God in the Work of the *Goſpel*. We may a little view them ſeparately; 1. Some are like *Lions*, i. e. Bold and undauntoned, whom no Difficulty can pall, but they ſtand ſtoutly for the Cauſe of Chriſt, maugre all Oppoſition. 2. Some are *like a Calf*, which ſhews, tho' they be not very valiant, are nevertheleſs very durable and ſerviceable; this points at their Humility, Patience and Painfulneſs, all which are very neceſſary. 3. Some are *like to a Man*, i. e. in Point of Prudence and Wiſdom; theſe are in an eminent Manner for the Management of the Church's Affairs. 4. Some are like to a *flying Eagle*; this points at the deep Reach God has bleſſed ſome with, in the Inveſtigation of Divine Myſteries, by which they are able to put to Silence all Gain-ſayers: Theſe are in a ſpecial Manner Champions for the Truth, and may be juſtly deſigned Eagle-eyed.

4. There is the Conformity and Likeneſs of theſe two to one another.

(1.) *The four Beaſts had each of them ſix Wings about him.* Herein they differ from *Ezekiel's* Living Creatures, *Ezek.* i. 6. for every one of them had but *four*. 'Tis true, they in this agree with *Iſaiah's Seraphims*, Iſaiah vi. 2. *who had each of them ſix Wings*; the Uſe of every Pair is there deſcribed, this is not done here. Tho' we are not to doubt but Miniſters are obliged to have awful and holy Impreſſions of God, which ſeems to be the Meaning of the *firſt Pair to cover their Face*; and alſo to have humbling Impreſſions of their own Infirmities, which is inſinuate by the ſecond two; and to be diligent and expeditious in all Duties, the Uſe of the third Couple: Yet I think ſomething is further meant here, eſpecially that it is ſaid theſe Wings are *round about them*, viz. They are to cheriſh the Members of Chriſt, as himſelf ſays, *Mat.* xxiii. 36. *How often would I have gathered you, as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings?* So that this expreſſeth not only Expedition and Humility, but Tenderneſs and Care. This we find common to all the Living Creatures.

(2.) *They were full of Eyes within.* We heard of their Eyes *before* and *behind* above, and now we have a third Sort of Eyes, *within*; which, we think, may ſignify theſe two, 1. That they are very cautious whom they receive under their Wings, and alſo how they entertain them. 2. They not only look to the Charge committed to them, but alſo to themſelves; their Eyes are not all *outward*, but alſo a great many *inward*, that is, to themſelves, and their own Hearts; as the Exhortation runs, *Acts* xx. 28. *Take Heed to yourſelves, and to all the Flock of God.* And, as *Paul* warns *Timothy*, 1 Tim. iv. 16. *Take Heed unto thy ſelf, and thy Doctrine.*

8 —— And they reſt not Day and Night, ſaying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

9 And when thoſe Beaſts give Glory, and Honour, and Thanks to him that ſat on the Throne, who liveth for ever and ever,

10 The four and twenty Elders fall down before him that ſat on the Throne, and worſhip him that liveth for ever and ever, and caſt their Crowns before the Throne, ſaying,

11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power; for thou haſt created all Things, and for thy Pleaſure they are, and were created.

Here we have the Exerciſe of both the Elders and Living Creatures; the Employ of the laſt, *v.* 8, 9. and the other in Conſort with them, *v.* 10, 11.

I. There is the Exerciſe of the *Living Creatures* laſt mentioned, deſcribed *negatively*, and *poſitively*.

1. Their Exerciſe is *negatively* deſcribed, *They reſt not Day and Night*; the Senſe whereof we have in the Margine, *They have no Reſt.* It is reckoned a *proverbial* Expreſſion, and points out continual Labour; which, to me, carries the Application of this quite off from *Angels*, who have an eternal Day, and know no Night: When it is aſcribed to the *Miniſtry*, we have an Expreſſion to the ſame Purpoſe by the Apoſtle, 2 *Tim.* iv. 2. *Preach the Word, be inſtant in Seaſon, and out of Seaſon.* The Office or Work of a Miniſter then is, not a State of Eaſe and Idleneſs; and yet, with the Labour, there is much Comfort and Satisfaction, as we may diſcover from the

2. Poſitively, their Employment is, *Saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord,* &c. This τρίσαγιον is the Song of *Iſaiah*'s *Seraphim*, Iſa. vi. 3. and is a plain Avouching of the *glorious Trinity*, which is the great and fundamental Principle of all Religion. Tho' Praiſe be only mentioned here, it does not ſay, that Miniſters have no other *Work*; but it ſays, It is a main Work, and to be mixed in all they do. The Expreſſion, as it ſtands in this Verſe, and illuſtrate in the following (for we gave the Senſe of the Words above, *Chap.* i. 4, 18.) affords ſeveral Grounds of Praiſe: As, 1. The *Holineſs* of God. 2. His *Sovereignty, Lord.* 3. His *Infinite Excellency, God.* 4. His *Unchangeableneſs.* 5. His *Eternity.* 6. All his other Perfections contained in theſe. Nor is there any Exerciſe the Saints take more Pleaſure in than this, that they may excite others thereto; as ſaid *Moſes*, Deut. xxxii. 3. *Becauſe I will publiſh the Name of the Lord, aſcribe ye Greatneſs unto our God.*

II. The Exerciſe of the *Elders* in Conſort with the *Living Creatures*; for it is ſaid, *v.* 9. that the Living Creatures led the Dance to the Elders, and that the Elders followed their Example: But they have a diſtinct Part to themſelves; only we are to notice, 1. Their Action. 2. Their Expreſſions.

1. Their Action is in three Steps, 1. *They fall down before him,* &c. which ſhews their high Opinion of God, and the low Judgment they formed of themſelves. 2. They *worſhip him that liveth,* &c. To ſhew it was no Surprize, but real Devotion, and that both Soul and Body conſpired in this, they *bowed down before their Maker.* 3. *They caſt their Crowns before the Throne*; to ſhew they held their Crowns of him, and that they did reckon it their greateſt Honour, if their Dignity might be imployed for his Glory, and the Advancement of his Kingdom.

2. The Words of the Elders, *v.* 11. in two Generals: 1. A Thankſgiving, *Thou art worthy,* &c. where they praiſe his glorious Excellencies, ſo they aſcribe to him *Glory.* Then his Juriſdiction, by the Word *Honour.* And laſtly his Government; and thus they own his *Power*, in the actual Preſervation and Government of the World. 2. They declare the Grounds of all theſe, from his Right to all his Creatures, *Thou haſt created all Things*: This is a neceſſary Spring of Homage, and is the Ground-

work

work of all *natural Theology.* And then, the great End why he did create and govern them, *For his own Pleaſure,* or Glory: As *Solomon* words it, *Prov.* xvi. 4. *The Lord made all Things for himſelf*; This is the Root of all revealed Religion. The Senſe of all theſe being obvious, I inſiſt not on them.

CHAP. V.

THIS Chapter repreſents to us the ſecond Perſon of the glorious Trinity; not ſimply as he is the Son of God from all Eternity: But, as the Father and Holy Spirit were pointed out, in reſpect of their Preſence with, and Efficacy upon the true Church; ſo here the Son is deſcribed to us, as Redeemer of his Elect, and doing every Thing for them may ſecure to them his Purchaſe. He is mentioned laſt here, as in the firſt Chapter, for the very ſame Reaſon, becauſe the great Part of this Viſion concerns him, no leſs than the moſt Part of the firſt Viſion did. As in the Fleſh he was the Great Doctor of his People by his Word and Spirit, and yet continues to be, and will prove ſo ſtill to the End of the World: So here, tho' glorioufly exalted at the Father's Right-hand (an Emblem whereof we have in this Chapter) he is pleaſed to inſtruct his Church in Things that are to come. And indeed here we have the full Accompliſhment of that gracious Promiſe, *I have called you Friends*; *for all Things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.*

It is very evident this Chapter is a Continuation of the Viſion begun in the former; and that the Perſon Enthroned in the laſt, is the ſame who has the Book in his Hand in this Chapter. 'Tis true, it is not ſaid *John* obſerved this Book when he ſaw the Throne, and him that ſat thereon; but it may be ſuppoſed God did not judge it Time to diſcover it, till he had conſidered the former Emblems: And now, that he has viewed all theſe, he is admitted to a new Manifeſtation, which, to be ſure, he thought not of before. This does indeed compleat the Theatre, and lays down a ſolid Foundation of all the After-Prophecies; yea, and in ſome Meaſure, furniſheth with a Key to unlock ſome of theſe grand Secrets we meet with afterwards. And ſo we proceed to take down the Chapter in Parts,

Which ſeem to be theſe, 1. A new Manifeſtation, to *v.* 6. which diſcompoſed our Prophet very much. 2. Another Diſcovery of what is no leſs ſurprizing, but very comforting, to *v.* 8. 3. The Conſequents, eſpecially of the ſecond Myſtery, to the Cloſe of the Chapter.

1 AND I ſaw in the Right-hand of him that ſat on the Throne, a Book written within, and on the Back-ſide ſealed with ſeven Seals.

2 And I ſaw a ſtrong Angel proclaiming with a loud Voice, Who is worthy to open the Book, and to looſe the Seals thereof?

3 And no *Man* in Heaven, nor in Earth, neither under the Earth, was able to open the Book, neither to look thereon.

4 And I wept much becauſe no *Man* was found worthy to open, and to read the Book, neither to look thereon.

5 And one of the Elders ſaith unto me, Weep not: Behold, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the Book, and to looſe the ſeven Seals thereof.

In this we are to conſider, 1. The Book, *v.* 1. 2. The Angel's Proclamation, with the Conſequent, *v.* 2, 3. 3. The Effect of this Conſequent upon *John.* 4. The Comfort he met with in this dejected Condition.

I. There is the Viſion of the Book, where its Appearance, and Place.

1. The Appearance of the Book, where its Deſignation. 2. Its Diſtinction from moſt part of Books. 3. Its careful and ſecure Condition.

(1.) The Emblem *John* ſaw is called *a Book.* There is little Difficulty to get the Notion of a *Book,* but it is not ſo eaſy to find what we are to mean by *Book* in this Place, becauſe certainly God has no need of any Book, his own infinite Nature and Omniſcience is Book enough to him; nor has he need of any other Regiſter: So that

it muſt be a figurative Expreſſion; Yet the Strait is not over, and therefore the Learned ſplit about it. The ſureſt Way of coming to its Senſe, is to fetch it from the following Prophecies, which are the Contents of this *Book*, divided into *ſeven ſeveral Sections*, or Chapters, which we find ſucceſſively opened: And this moved ſome, not without Reaſon, to call it the *Book of Deſtiny*; For it is the Decree or Purpoſe of God, concerning his Church, in her various Conflicts and Conqueſts, which are here ſaid to be written in a Book, to aſſure us, that nothing ſhall befal the Church of God in the World, but what he has determined. Nor is this the only Place in Scripture where the irreverſible Counſels of God are ſaid to be written in a Book; as the *Pſalmiſt*, perſonating Chriſt, ſays, *Pſal.* xl. 7. *In the Volume of thy Book it is written of me:* Which is the ſame with what God ſays, *Pſal.* ii. *The ſure Decree I will declare*, i. e. to *ſet my King upon my holy Hill of Zion.* And juſt ſo *David* ſpeaks of himſelf, *Pſal.* cxxxix. 16. *In thy Book all my Members are written.* All which are meant of the immutable Decree of God.

(2.) The Diſtinction of this Book from others, *It is written within, and on the Back-ſide.* To underſtand this, we would know the Faſhion of Books uſed at that Time, which differed much from what we have now: Of old, Books were written in one continued Scroll or Sheet of Parchment, which was rolled up on a ſmooth Stick, as fine Stuffs are now; And if it was written on both Sides, as we find it here, there was a Cover wrapt about it to keep it clean. Sometimes there was but one Scroll on a Roller, as we find the *Jews* had the whole Prophecy of *Iſaiah*: So it is ſaid, *Luke* iv. 17. *There was delivered to him* [Chriſt] *the Book of the Prophet* Iſaias; And it is ſaid, Our Lord *opened the ſame*, originally, *unrolled* or *unfolded* it. Sometimes there were more than one Book upon one Pin; and ſo there is Reaſon to believe the whole Twelve leſſer Prophets Works, from *Hoſea* to *Malachi*, incluſive, were wond up upon one Roller; and therefore we read of *the Book of the Prophets*, Acts vii. 24. and each of theſe were called a *Volume*, but the Book was one. Thus we read, *Ezek.* ii. 9. *An Hand was ſent unto me, and lo, the Scroll of a Book was therein*, i. e. one of thoſe Scrolls that made up the Book. Here it is ſaid of ſuch Books, *It was written within and without.* *Grotius* ſeems to value himſelf upon a new Reading thus, It was *written within, and ſealed without with ſeven Seals*: Which indeed may be, without any further Violence done the Text than in the Punctation, to carry the *Comma* from *on the Back-ſide*, and plant it after *Sealed*. Yet there is ſomething in the next Chapter that condemns this curious Invention; for, had all the Seals been on the Out-ſide, it was not poſſible to read any of the Volumes till all the Seals had been looſed: Yet we ſee the contrary; for at the Opening of every Seal a Volume was free; which, in my Opinion, deſtroys all he ſays on this Head. The Meaning of this Expreſſion then ſeems to be, That the Book was crouded with Writing; and the Phraſe ſays, There was much in it: This we have juſtified from the Prophet's Book, whereof it is ſaid in one Clauſe, *Ezek.* ii. 10. *It was written within and without*; and in the next, *It was full*: To ſhew the Compleatneſs of this Book, nothing was to be added thereto, there was no *Blank* left. If it ſhould be enquired how *John* could diſcover this before the Seals were opened? There ſeems to be little Difficulty here, for to be ſure it was opened before he wrote this Part of the Viſion; nor was any Place fitter to inſert this Clauſe in, than when he was deſcribing the Book.

(3.) The careful and ſecure Condition of this Book, *It was ſealed with ſeven Seals.* We meet with ſeveral Deſigns of Seals in Scripture; As, 1. Sometimes a Seal was added to a Writing for Confirmation: So we find *Ahaſuerus* cauſed ſeal his Deeds, that they might not be altered. Yet there is no need of ſuch a Seal here, for the Purpoſes of God are ſufficiently firm without any ſuch Formality. 2. Another Uſe of Seals was for Diſtinction, or as a Mark ſet on any Thing, to declare to whom it belongs; ſo the *Servants of God are ſealed*, Rev. vii. 3. But neither is there Room for this here. 3. Another Deſign of ſealing, is to keep a Thing ſecret and ſecure: In this Senſe we have it uſed by the Prophet, *Iſa.* xxix. 11. *The Viſion of all is become unto you like the Words of a Book that is ſealed, which Men deliver to One that is Learned, ſaying, Read this, I pray thee; and he ſaith, I cannot, for it is ſealed.* And to the ſame Purpoſe we have it uſed by *Moſes*, Deut. xxxii. 34. *Is not this laid up in Store with me, and ſealed up among my Treaſures?* The Knowledge of the After-revolutions of the Church were lockt up from the Eyes of all the Creation; yet were they moſt accurately determined of God. But then the Queſtion recurs, What are we to underſtand by theſe Seals? *Anſwer*, As the Book is to be metaphorically underſtood, ſo alſo are the Seals: And then the plain Meaning is, All theſe Things are Secrets, lockt up in the eternal Counſel of God; which, till they are diſcovered by him, will be imperveſtigable by all in Heaven and Earth. It it further ſaid, there are *ſeven Seals*, which

which ſays there were ſeven ſeveral Volumes in one Roller, each of them containing ſome notable Emergent, and no Doubt in the ſame Order they were to fall out, and each of them having a particular Seal; ſo that, after the firſt Seal was opened, none could know what was in the ſecond Volume, till the ſecond Seal was looſed.

2. We have the Place where *John* ſaw this Book, *In the Right-hand of him that ſat on the Throne*: Some turn it *at the Right-hand*; but this will not hold: For in *v.* 7. it is ſaid, *The Lamb came and took it out of his Right-hand*, which certainly ſays the Book was there. It is noticed by ſome, the Book is ſaid to be in *the Right-hand of God*, becauſe the Right-hand is the Inſtrument of Action; and to advertiſe *John*, God was haſtning to the Accompliſhment of all theſe Viſions. The Right-hand of God alſo is put for his almighty Power, to advertiſe us, none could reach theſe Myſteries, unleſs God was pleaſed to reveal them. We find alſo the Hand of God made the ſame with his Counſel, *Acts* iv. 28. *Whatſoever thy Hand and thy Counſel determined before to be done.* Yet ſtill I think it muſt have an Eye to his executive Power, as he ſays by the Prophet, *Iſa.* xlvi. 10. *My Counſel ſhall ſtand, and I will do all my Pleaſure.*

II. There is next in this, the Conſequent of this Viſion, *v.* 2. *viz.* A Proclamation concerning this ſealed Book: Where we may notice, The Herauld, and the Intimation he makes.

1. The Proclaimer is called a *Strong Angel.* There is a great Work made about this *Angel*: Some would have it to repreſent Chriſt, but we meet with *him* under another Emblem afterwards: Some others would thereby underſtand the glorious *Spirit of God*; but I cannot find he is ever called an Angel: Beſides, it would appear, this *Angel* was unable to open the Book himſelf. It is yet more ſenſleſs, to mean thereby a *Miniſter of the Goſpel.* In the Viſion, I make no doubt but it is an holy Angel ſent to make this Proclamation, on Purpoſe to excite a Curioſity in *John* to know the Contents of that Book ſo well ſealed: Nor is there any Occaſion, in the Accompliſhment of this Prophecy, to ſeek any Thing may be the Truth of this Emblem. And that he is called a *ſtrong Angel*, may be becauſe of his prodigious Voice, which ſounded in the Prophet's Ear.

2. The Intimation itſelf, *Who is worthy to open the Book, and to looſe the Seals thereof.* Some, by looſing the Seals, and opening this Book, underſtand the Execution or Accompliſhment: But that is not the Queſtion; the Author of the Decrees is, and will be the Executer. But indeed the Speech is not about this *Matter*, but only about the *Manifeſtation* and Revelation of the Secrets in that Book, which was to preceed the other. Some think this Proclamation did flow from a Curioſity in the Angels to know the Contents of this Book; and that, for their Satisfaction, this One cried, to ſee whether any in Heaven or Earth were able to unravel theſe Myſteries: But this is to inſinuate ſomething about *Angels*, unbecoming their perfect Submiſſion to the Will of God; As alſo to aſperſe their Knowledge, as if they were ignorant that the Decrees of God, in the Management of his Church, are unſearchable. This Angel, be who he will, ſeems plainly to have had a Commiſſion from *him* that ſat on the *Throne*; and, by vertue of thereof, makes this Publication for theſe Ends, 1. To teach us, that all the Meaſures to be taken with the People of God, and their Enemies, are unalterably concerted by the *Almighty.* 2. To ſhew the great Satisfaction the Knowledge thereof would bring to all in Heaven and in Earth. 3. To diſcover there is no Way of coming to the Knowledge of theſe Things, but by opening of this Book *in the Right-hand of God.* 4. To aſſure us, that infinite Worth and Perfection muſt be in the Perſon who would venture on this great Task. The Way and Manner how this Intimation was made, *He proclaimed with a loud Voice*, that all in Heaven and Earth might hear: This ſeems to be done, that the Mouths of all Creatures might be ſtopt; for they are both unable and unworthy to find out what God, in his Sovereignty, deſigns in the Management of the World. Who can pry into his Secrets, till he be pleaſed to reveal them? This ſhews how little Credit ſhould be given to any Creature, who will undertake to account for Futurities God has not diſcovered.

There is the Return of this Proclamation, *v.* 3. which makes up the other Part of the Conſequent, *No Man in Heaven*, &c. All were ſilent at this Challenge, which is a plain owning their Unworthineſs: And that this is univerſal, is evident from the Enumeration, which is full as to all rational Creatures, *All in Heaven, in Earth, and under the Earth.* The like Enumeration we have in the ſecond Commandment, *Exod.* xx. 4. and elſewhere, *Phil.* ii. 10. and is as much as if it were ſaid, *Neither Angel, Man, or Devil is capable of this Work.* But further, there are two Expreſſions to ſhew the Unworthineſs of all the Creation as to this, 1. Their Weakneſs, They are *unable to open the Book.* 2. Their Ignorance, *They could not look thereon.*

He does not ſay they were not able to explain it fully, but they could not do that which is leſs, *viz.* ſo much as look into it, in order to find out the ſmalleſt Hint thereof.

III. There is the Effect of this Conſequent upon *John*, v. 4. *I wept much becauſe*, &c. Some here loudly accuſe the Prophet, as if his Tears did ſavour of the Weakneſs of his Faith, having twice had a gracious Promiſe of the Diſcovery of what ſhould follow, *Chap.* i. 1. and *Chap.* iv. 1. I think, however, we ſhould be more modeſt: For tho' no doubt the Apoſtles themſelves might labour under Lackings of Faith, yet his Grief at this Time might flow from ſome other Cauſe than the Staggering of his Faith; for his ſtrong Expectation, from the Sight of the Book, and the Angel's Proclamation, that immediately he ſhould ſee the Book opened at once, and his Hopes fully ſatiated, and added to that the Keenneſs of his Deſire; both which being baulked in an Inſtant, might juſtly kindle his Sorrow to ſuch a Pitch as is here mentioned. Others again, that they may ſcreen the Apoſtle from this Aſperſion, tell us, That he at this Time perſonate an ordinary Believer, and that he here is a Type of them. I humbly think it Raſhneſs to indulge ſuch Conceits, and imagine Transformations of this Nature, unleſs we had better Grounds, than any I have ſeen, to warrant this: However, I am ſure, the *Apoſtle's* Exerciſe may be an Example to us in theſe few neceſſary Things;

1. Nothing ſhould give us more Uneaſineſs, than the ſealing or concealing the Will of God: The Word of God is the Food of the Soul, and while that is confined, we will be ſenſible of a great Loſs. This gives us the Difference betwixt a Saint and a wicked Perſon; the Opening of *God's Word* is a Burden to the one, but the Joy of the other.

2. We ſhould be no leſs ſolicitous about the Accompliſhment of what of this Prophecy yet remains, than *John* was about the Revelation of them: For if the Opening of the Book was ſuch a notable Prop to his Faith, and Ground of Comfort to his Soul, the Fulfilling of them would be much more ſo to us, ſhould God be pleaſed, in Anſwer to the Prayers of his own, to bring down *Babylon*, and make *all the Kingdoms of the Earth become the Kingdoms of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

3. Here we have plainly chalkt out to us the Way how we may attain to further Meaſures of the Knowledge of the *Mind of God*, Prayers and Tears: Were we thus following on *to know the Lord*, he would make Light to ſhine amidſt our Darkneſs, and cauſe the Light of his Countenance to ſhine graciouſly upon us, to our unſpeakable Comfort.

IV. The *Comfort* adminiſtrate to him in this diſconſolate Condition, *v.* 5. Where we are to notice the *Comforter*, and the *Conſolation.*

1. The Comforter, *One of the Elders.* We explained before the Prophetical Meaning of *Elders.* Here, I am ready to think, nothing is more intended but this, That one of theſe *Angels*, who were Types of the *Elders*, addreſſed himſelf to our *Prophet*: And that there is no After-ſtep of the Accompliſhment of the Prophecy, whereof this is the Type; for, without Neceſſity, to flee to *Allegories*, is rather to *intangle* than *unriddle* this Portion of Scripture: For if this *Elder* ſhould be an Emblem here, ſo muſt the Apoſtle *John*; yet it is evident the 1. *Chap.* 1. *v.* declares the contrary.

2. The Conſolation: Where, after a ſweet Direction, *Weep not*, (which ſays, We ſhould examine the Grounds of all our Paſſions, and, amongſt the reſt, that of *Grief*, which many a Time is unreaſonable) he gives the Ground of Conſolation, exactly fitted to the Cauſe of the Prophet's Mourning. He grieved becauſe none was found to open the Book: Here he advertiſes him there is One to do it, and points him out to him; for tho' the *Elder* ſaw him, *John* did not. And here we are to notice, 1. The Perſon that was to open the Book. 2. Why only he could open the Book. 3. The Preſentneſs of this Comfort.

(1.) The *Perſon*, who has two Deſignations, 1. *The Lion of the Tribe of* Judah. This is plainly a Character of Chriſt, fetched from *Jacob's* Words, *Gen.* xlix. 9. *Judah is a Lion's Whelp, he coucheth as a Lion, and as an old Lion; who ſhall rouſe him up?* This figurative Expreſſion of our Lord is moſt applicable to him, for his Excellency, Strength, and Terribleneſs againſt his Enemies; and the Apoſtle teſtifies, *Heb.* vii. 14. *That our Lord ſprang out of* Judah. 2. *The Root of* David: This has more Difficulty in it, becauſe Chriſt is called, *A Rod come out of the Stem of* Jeſſe, *and a Branch grown out of his Roots*, Iſa. xi. 1. and 'tis certain Chriſt did ſpring from *David.* This is variouſly anſwered: Some make *David* an *Adjective*, and the Meaning is, He is the Root of all the Elect, as of *David* who is one of them: Others make a *Metonymie* here, the *Root* for the *Rod* or *Branch* that ſprings from the Root. But I ſee no Need of either of theſe; for he is expreſly called, *A Root of* Jeſſe, *Rom.* xv. 12. And he ſays of himſelf, *Rev.* xxii. 16. *I am the Root and the Offspring of* David; where they are both joined together. There is no Inconſiſtency; for, in a ſpiritual Senſe, Chriſt is the *Root of* David; and, in

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a natural Senſe, *David* is the *Root of Chriſt*. This is the Key of that puzzling Queſtion propoſed by our Lord to the *Phariſees*, Mat. xxii. 42.

(2.) Why he only could open the Book; *He hath prevailed*. But this Word is too ſoft; for One may be ſaid to prevail, when the Thing is obtained thro' Favour: But the proper Signification is, *He hath overcome*, i. e. by his mighty Power he hath defeat all our ſpiritual Enemies, who had lock'd up all the Secrets of God's Will from us; but now, they being baffled, he has Acceſs to reveal the ſame to us; ſo that this is one of the Fruits of his Satisfaction.

(3.) The Preſentneſs of this Conſolation: He was not to wait long expecting it; for, ſays he, *Behold*, as the *Baptiſt*, when he pointed out *Chriſt* to the *Jews*, *Behold the Lamb of God*. So that *John* had this Viſion by Degrees; firſt he ſaw the *Throne*, and him that ſat on it; and then the *Book* in his Hand; and now the *Lion* of the Tribe of *Judah*, who is alſo the *Lamb of God*, is diſcovered to him: For, to be ſure, he had not noticed him before, elſe there would be no Occaſion for his Weeping.

6 And I beheld, and lo, in the Midſt of the Throne, and of the four Beaſts, and in the Midſt of the Elders, ſtood a Lamb as it had been ſlain, having ſeven Horns, and ſeven Eyes, which are the ſeven Spirits of God, ſent forth into all the Earth.

7 And he came and took the Book out of the Right-hand of him that ſat upon the Throne.

John having heard ſuch comfortable News, turns his Eyes to all Quarters, if happily he might diſcover what he heard; and accordingly he immediately ſees what the *Elder* told him, tho' with ſome Difference in the Appearance, for, inſtead of the *Lion*, he ſaw a *Lamb*. Here we have, 1. The Perſon, *v.* 6. 2. What he did, *v.* 7.

I. There is the Perſon *hieroglyphically* deſcribed, and the Place where he appeared: There are ſeveral Things ſaid of the Perſon repreſented in this Viſion, which will carry it unto our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, without any Difficulty.

1. The Emblem itſelf, a *Lamb*; this might be a little ſurpriſing, to hear of a *Lion*, a ſtrong and fierce Creature, and then to ſee a *Lamb*, yet Chriſt is both; a *Lion* for Terror and Strength againſt his Enemies, and a *Lamb* towards his own by Meekneſs, Innocence, Profit and Increaſe: But the main Drift of this Expreſſion is, to point out Chriſt in the Exerciſe of his Prieſtly Office; for he was both Prieſt and Sacrifice, and therefore he is called *The Lamb of God that taketh away the Sin of the World*, John i. 29. And it is here added, *As it had been ſlain*. It is remarked, this Word properly ſignifies the *Slaughter of Sacrifices*; ſo it is rendred in *Stephen*'s Sermon, *Acts* vii. 42. Have *ye offered to me Sacrifices for the Space of Forty Years*? Nor may we conclude from the Manner of the Expreſſion, that this *Lamb* was not ſlain, becauſe it is ſaid, *As it were*; for we find this to denote Truth and *Sameneſs*, and not always *Likeneſs*: *We beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the only Begotten of the Father*, John i. 14. where *As* notes not only Likeneſs, but Sameneſs: And juſt ſo, *We are changed from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord*; Where none doubts but the Spirit is the immediate and direct Author of this Change. The plain Meaning then of this Expreſſion is, The *Lamb* was living when *John* ſaw him, yet he bore the Marks of *Slaughter*, and had the Scars of bloody and mortal Wounds.

2. This Lamb *had ſeven Horns*; this ſhews him to be an extraordinary Lamb: For, tho' Horns are proper to moſt Lambs, yet ſeven is extraordinary. This in Scripture ſignifies, 1. *Dignity* or Excellency. *Job* ſays, *Job* xvi. 15. *I defiled my Horn in the Duſt*: And the Prophet, ſpeaking of God, ſays, *His Brightneſs was as the Light, and he had Horns coming out of his Hands, and there was the Hiding of his Power*. The Reaſon given of this is, Becauſe the ſame *Hebrew* Word which ſignifies a *Horn*, ſignifies alſo to *radiate* or to *beam*. 2. *Power*, or Strength; this indeed is the more ordinary Signification of the Word, 1 *Sam.* ii. 10. *He ſhall give Strength unto his King, and exalt the Horn of his Anointed*. And again, *Luke* i. 69. *He hath raiſed up for us an Horn of Salvation in the Houſe of his Servant* David. Which ſeems chiefly to be the Intent of it in this Place; And ſo it is the ſame with that, *Mat.* xxviii. 18. *All Power in Heaven and in Earth is given unto Chriſt*. As for the Number *Seven*, it is certainly no more indefinite than the Seals: For the Number of the *Horns* exactly anſwers the Number of the *Seals*; and ſo the Senſe muſt be, He had Worth and Power to open them all.

3. This Lamb *had also seven Eyes.* The Eye is the Organ of Sight, and *figuratively* denotes *Knowledge*: But we are at no Loss about those *Eyes*, for they are explained in the next Clause to be the *seven Spirits of God*, the Sense whereof we gave, *Chap.* i. 4. But it is further added, *sent forth into all the Earth.* Whether we restrict this Clause to the *seven Spirits*, or extend it to both the *Horns* and the *Spirits*, the Matter will be the same; for his Power and Spirit are equally broad, and wide. And we are here instructed, that the Influence of both will reach to the utmost End of the Earth, which we are not to confine to the *Roman Empire.* We have another Expression by the Prophet *Zechariah*, *Zech.* iii. 9. *Upon one Stone shall be seven Eyes.* And in the next Chapter, *Zech.* iv. 10. *They are the Eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole Earth.* There is no doubt but both Prophets point at the same Thing.

4. The Posture of this Lamb, *He stood*: This is a sure Token of his Resurrection to Life again, and so this is the same with what he said, *Chap.* i. 18. *I am he that liveth, and was dead.* He further stood, that all might the better discover him; and also, this shews his Readiness for Action.

5. The Place, *In the Midst of the Throne, and in the Midst of the four Beasts, and of the Elders.* This points out the glorious *Exaltation* of Christ at the Right-hand of God, and his *having a Name above every Name that is named*: These Expressions we had before, *Chap.* iv. 6. It was meet he should be near, that he might receive the *Book from the Father's Right-hand.*

II. What he did, *He came and took the Book out of the Right-hand of him that sat upon the Throne.* This exactly answers *John*'s Expectations and Desires to have the *Seals loosed*, and the *Book opened*: Where we have,

1. The Acceptableness of his Person to the Father: None else durst presume to advance but he; a Sign of the Father's Satisfaction with him, as was declared long before, *Mat.* iii. 17. *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

2. His Readiness to execute that Part of his Mediatory Office, for the Instruction and Comfort of his Church. We had him standing, *v.* 6. and here we have him moving.

3. His Faithfulness to his Trust, *He takes the Book out of the Father's Hand.* He did not take it by Force, as if he had wrested it; but the Father had the Book to deliver to him that should be found worthy, and none else was so but the Son; and so he is content to reveal the Contents thereof, and no more but what was contained therein; *For his Doctrine is not his own, but his that sent him.*

The Consequents of this second Vision we have in the following Part of the Chapter, which naturally breaks itself into three several Songs of Praise, by three diverse Sort of Creatures: The 1*st* is of the Church, from *v.* 8. to *v.* 11. The 2*d*, to *v.* 13. The 3*d* in the two last Verses.

8 And when he had taken the Book, the four Beasts, and four and twenty Elders, fell down before the Lamb, having every One of them Harps, and Golden Vials full of Odours, which are the Prayers of the Saints.

9 And they sung a new Song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation;

10 And hast made us unto our God Kings and Priests: And we shall reign on the Earth.

As soon as the Lamb receives and takes the Book, which must note to us the Father's communicating to the Mediator the Secrets of the eternal Counsel, on purpose that he may discover the same to the Church; The first Sett of *Quiristers* sing forth the Praises of the *Lamb.* We have considered their Persons; it now remains that we view a little, 1. How they were equipt for this Work. 2. What their Work was.

I. We are to notice, how they were furnished for this Exercise, in these few Things, *v.* 8.

1. Their Humility, *They fell down before the Lamb.* This Act of Prostration we had before, *Chap.* iv. 10. and shews they paid an equal Respect and Honour to the *Lamb*, as to *him* that sat on the Throne.

2. Their

2. Their Utenſils; which are two, both of them borrowed from the legal Service, but muſt be underſtood in a Goſpel Senſe.

(1.) Their Muſical Inſtruments, *Having every one of them Harps.* Theſe were the Inſtruments uſed in Praiſes and Thankſgivings, as we read, 1 *Chron.* xiii. 8. David *and all* Iſrael *played before the Lord, with all their Might, and with Singing, and with Harps.* And again, the like Exhortation we have, *Pſal.* xxxiii. 2. *Praiſe the Lord with Harps.* A great many from this plead for *Inſtrumental Muſick* in the Worſhip of God, under the New Teſtament. I own, all their Pleas are weak; but it is unlucky for them that they made Choice of this, for all the Reaſonings they can found on this Text, will plead for Cenſers, as well as Harps; which would be to bring us back to the whole Frame of legal Rites, now abrogate.

(2.) The other Utenſil is called *Golden Vials*, or broad little Veſſels, which they made manifold Uſe of, and particularly for burning *Incenſe* in, and were therefore called *Cenſers*, which many contend ſhould be ſo rendred here, eſpecially that we read of *Incenſe* immediately after, tho' it be rendred *Odours.* So we read, 2 *Chron.* iv. 22. That the *Incenſe-cenſers were to be of pure Gold.* This was an *Emblem* of *Prayers*, and their Acceptableneſs unto God, as the Pſalmiſt has it, *Pſal.* cxli. 2. *Let my Prayer be ſet before thee as Incenſe.* And, that this is truly the Meaning of it here, is plain from the exigetick Clauſe ſubjoined, *Which are the Prayers of the Saints.*

If it be enquired, What Saints are here meant? I anſwer, It is to be underſtood allenarly of theſe Saints repreſented by the four Beaſts, and the four and twenty Elders; *i. e.* the *Militant Church*, ſuch as Chriſt makes to reign with him on Earth. So that this will neither favour Prayers for the Dead, and as little that Angels and Saints in Heaven are Interceſſors and Advocates for us with the Father; *For there is but one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Chriſt Jeſus.*

There is yet another Difficulty ariſing from this Verſe: It is ſaid, Every one of them had *Harps*, and *Golden Vials*; ſome ſay, This cannot be underſtood; for one Harp will employ both Hands, and how then ſhould they manage the Cenſers? and therefore they offer a Method to carry off this Pinch, by ſaying, Some of them had Harps, and others had Vials. But this is too much Freedom with the Text: Nor indeed is the Difficulty ſo great, as drive to this rude Way of rubbing on the Text; For, where is the Impoſſibility of managing an Harp, and carrying a Cenſer, if we ſhould allow the Cenſer to be hung with Strings, as ſome of the Ancients tell us was very ordinary? Plainly the Meaning of the Emblem is, That Prayers and Praiſes ſhould never be ſeparate; which I take to be the Senſe of the Place, and the Deſign of theſe Figures.

II. We are now to view their Work: The general Account of their Exerciſe, *They ſung a new Song, v.* 9. Some think, this Song is called *New*, from its Excellency, becauſe new Songs are moſt valued; and we uſe to ſay proverbially, *An old Song*, to any Thing that is contemptible. This is not the only Place where we read of a new Song; *David* tells us, *Pſal.* xl. 3. *God hath put a new Song in his Mouth*, which, from the Context, is a Song of Deliverance. And we are exhorted, *Pſal.* xcvi. 1. *O ſing unto the Lord a new Song*, which from the Matter of the Pſalm is a Song in Praiſe of the Perſon and Kingdom of the Meſſiah. This is not much different from the other; and yet this Song may be called a new Song, in Oppoſition to both theſe, yea, and all the *Temple-ſongs*: Tho' theſe had many heavenly and ſpiritual Things in them, and even concerning Chriſt and the new Covenant made in him; Yet had they not the Song of Chriſt's *actual Incarnation*, and his finiſhing the Work of Man's Redemption, which is the Subject Matter of this Song. But we paſs this general Deſignation of the Song, and proceed to view its Parts, which are two, 1. The Commendation of the Perſon of Chriſt, in order to the Work mentioned in the former Verſe. 2. The Grounds of this Excellency in him.

1. They commend the Perſon of Chriſt, *Thou art worthy to take the Book, and open the Seals thereof.* Where it is plain, 1. They prefer him to all in Heaven, and Earth, and under the Earth; for in none of theſe was any found worthy to undertake this great Enterpriſe. 2. They believe him to be fit and meet for this great Work, to reveal the Counſel of God to his Church; and, as ſuch, they acquieſce in him. 3. Here alſo they own his Right to this Work, he being the *only Beloved of the Father*, and come from his eternal Boſom, well acquainted with every Thing that ſhould come to paſs.

2. There are the Grounds of this Praiſe, to ſhew it was not Flattery, but a reaſonable Piece of Service; and the Grounds are three, each of them in a Chain of Dependence upon another, and all of them for the Advantage of theſe Quiriſters; ſo that they had good Reaſon to bleſs and praiſe him.

(1.) The firſt Ground of Praiſe is his Abſolving his Prieſtly Office, *For thou waſt ſlain*, or ſacrificed; he was alive when they praiſe him, but they remember his Death. It is here advanced in ſuch a Manner, as if none but himſelf had been ſlain. And indeed there is much in this; he was *cut off, not for his own, but for the Sins of his People*: His Death was the only meritorious Death, and thereby he ſatisfied all the rigorous Demands of Juſtice againſt us; yea, by his Death, he became a perfect Redeemer, for he *was made perfect by Sufferings*.

(2.) The next Ground of their Praiſe is the Efficacy of his Death for their Deliverance, *And haſt redeemed us to God by thy Blood*, &c. We would look a little nearer this Ground, and there obſerve, 1. Chriſt's great Work, *Thou haſt redeemed us*. To *redeem*, ſignifies to recover ſomewhat that is loſt; ſo that this is a Confeſſion of their loſt Condition by Nature: But this will not diſtinguiſh them from the Bulk of Mankind, for all are loſt. It muſt then take in it ſomething of Intereſt and Property; thus Redemption of Heritages under the Law, were to be made by the neareſt of Kin: Yet this Intereſt muſt not ly in Creation; for, at that Rate, Devils, as well as fallen Man, might come in the Computation. This Intereſt then can be no other but by Election, *John* xvii. 6. *Thine they were, and thou gaveſt them me*. It was only the Father's free Love that gave his Son for us, and accepted of him in our Room. 2. The Price of this Redemption, *by thy Blood*. Had Chriſt forfeit his Right in all the reſt of the Creatures, it would have been much: But he ſhed his own Blood, which is *the Blood of God*, Acts xx. 28. this is infinitely more; and therefore, well might the Apoſtle ſay, 1 *Pet.* i. 18, 19. *Ye were not redeemed by corruptible Things as Silver or Gold, but with the precious Blood of Chriſt*. 3. The Purchaſer, *Thou*, before called the *Lion*, then the *Root of* David, and now the *Lamb*, i. e. *Jeſus Chriſt, God-Man*. 4. To whom they were purchaſed, *to God*; and ſo they are called, *The Redeemed of the Lord*, Iſa. li. 11. They were to be for *God's Glory*, to enjoy Communion with him, all former Grounds of Difference being removed. 5. The Purchaſed, *Us*, viz. the four Beaſts, and the four and twenty Elders, *i. e.* Miniſters and People, Sovereigns and Subjects; there is but one common Salvation for all. 6. The Extent of this Purchaſe, or whence they were taken, *Out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation*. Which ſome diſtinguiſh thus, By *Tribes*, they mean the *Iſraelites*; by *Tongues*, theſe diſperſed now or formerly; by *People*, the more civilized Societies of Mankind; and, by *Nations*, the more barbarous and rude. But, whatever be in this, theſe Things will caſt up in it, 1. This Salvation was not, and is not reſtricted to the Nation of the *Jews*. 2. There are but ſome out of every Kindred, Tongue, &c. and not all of them. 3. Theſe who ſing this new Song, were not Angels; at leaſt, tho' Angels, they perſonate others. 4. The *Living Creatures* and *Elders* are, in the Viſion, the Repreſentatives of the whole Militant Church, of whatever Order or Degree they be; elſe it will not be poſſible for us to make Senſe in the Application of the Emblems.

(3.) The laſt Ground of Praiſe is, *v.* 10. from the glorious Privileges of the Children of God, which are very obſervable in theſe comprehenſive Generals.

[1.] Their high Dignities, *And haſt made us unto our God Kings and Prieſts*; this is the Fruit and Effect of their Redemption: We explained this, *Chap.* i. 6. only the poſſeſſive Pronoun *Our* is not in the former. This declares their Intereſt in God, as their *Maſter*, yea, and *Father*; for he purchaſes us to himſelf, that we may be his Servants and Children, in Obedience and Love. But further, while they declare ſo much, it is the open and bold Profeſſion, and owning of him, and does lay them under this Obligation, that *all who name the Name of Chriſt muſt depart from Iniquity*.

[2.] The actual Exerciſe of theſe great Powers, eſpecially that of the *Kingly*, but the other is comprehended in it, *And we ſhall reign on the Earth*; Some are a little ſtumbled at this Expreſſion, and would read επανω της γης, inſtead of επι της γης, *i. e. above the Earth*, for *on the Earth*; and ſo they ſee no Difficulty. But there is no Neceſſity of this, nor indeed ſhould any Pinch oblige to ſo much Freedom with the Sacred Text. This Text gives no Countenance to that grand Principle of Rebellion and Confuſion, that *Dominion is founded in Grace*: As little will it favour the *Popiſh* Supremacy, or the lordly Dominion of *Prelates* over Peoples Conſciences. Nor muſt we run to that Honour will be put upon all the Saints, to be Chriſt's Aſſeſſors at the Day of Judgment; as we read, 1 *Cor.* vi. 2, 3. *Saints ſhall judge the World*, yea, *ſhall judge Angels*: For Judging does not exhauſt all in the Comprehenſion of Reigning; and again, when the laſt Judgment comes, it will not be on the Earth, but in the Air: But this Reigning is common to all Saints, and will be in this Life, and upon the Earth, which falls to the Share of every Believer, who may be ſaid *to reign with Chriſt*, 1. When by Grace they get the Victory over their ſenſual Affections, and have all in them ſubject to the Will of Chriſt; and ſo *the Kingdom of God is within them*, Luke xvii. 21. And,

Sin

Sin ſhall have no more Dominion over them, Rom. vi. 14. 2. When the perfect State of Chriſt's Church comes upon Earth, that will anſwer the Meaning of that Petition in our Lord's Prayer, *God's Will be done on Earth, as it is done in Heaven*; when the Kingdoms of this World ſhall become the Kingdom of our Lord, and of his Chriſt; when *Babylon* ſhall fall, *the Fulneſs of the Nations* be brought in to the Knowledge of Chriſt, and the *Jews* be again poſſeſt of their ancient Sap, with Advantage. But, in the firſt Senſe, this can only be fulfilled now; And it is a very great Honour for every Believer, ſo now to reign with Chriſt on Earth. From the whole of this, I hope it is plain, theſe Living Creatures and Elders are not ſpeaking of the Triumphant State of the Church, but of the Militant.

11 And I beheld, and heard the Voice of many Angels round about the Throne, and the Beaſts, and the Elders, and the Number of them was Ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and Thouſands of thouſands,

12 Saying with a loud Voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wiſdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Bleſſing.

In this we have the Praiſe aſcribed to the *Lamb* by *Angels*: Where we are to view, 1. The Perſons. 2. Their Praiſe.

I. We have the Perſons that ſucceed the Church, deſcribed *v.* 11. from their diſtinguiſhing Character, from their Situation, and from their Number.

1. Their Deſignation is *Angels*: By which, the pure Intelligences above are diſtinguiſhed from Men below, and ſome think, not from the Spirits of Juſt Men made perfect; but, I am ſure, the Apoſtle *Paul* diſtinguiſheth them in the twelfth Chapter to the *Hebrews*. However, this is a *Name* given them rather from their *Office* and Imploy, than from their *Natures*; for the Word ſignifies *Meſſengers* or *Errand-bearers*: It is their Honour and Delight to be imployed in the Service of God. Yet this is a Name that expreſſeth Perfection and Excellency, when ſpoken of good Angels, *Zech.* xii. 8. *The Houſe of* David *ſhall be as God, and as the Angel of the Lord before them.* 2 Chron. xiv. 17. *As an Angel of God, ſo is my Lord the King, to diſcern Good and Bad.* And, v. 20. *My Lord is wiſe, according to the Wiſdom of an Angel of God.*

2. Their Situation, *Round about the Throne, and the Beaſts, and the Elders*: Or, as ſome render the Word, *Encompaſſing the Throne*, &c. To underſtand where theſe Angels were poſted, we muſt remember, in this *Viſion* the Throne was repreſented in the Centre, next to it ſtood the four living Creatures, and without them the Elders: Now, round about, and without them all, were planted this heavenly Hoſt, by the Orders of their great Maſter, as the Life-guard of God's Elect; as the Pſalmiſt ſays, *Pſal.* xxxiv. 7. *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.* And the Apoſtle ſays, *Heb.* i. 14. *Are they not all miniſtring Spirits, ſent out to miniſter for them who ſhall be Heirs of eternal Life?*

3. We have their Number, *Ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and Thouſands of thouſands.* This is a vaſt Number, and paſſeth all Numeration; and is the ſame in Senſe with what the Apoſtle ſays, while he calls them *an innumerable Company of Angels,* Heb. xii. 22. *Daniel* varieth the Expreſſion very little, *Dan.* vii. 10. *Thouſand thouſands miniſtred unto him, and Ten thouſand times ten thouſand ſtood before him.* Here it is ſaid, *Thouſands of thouſands,* but it is not condeſcended how many Thouſands of thouſands there were: Only this we may learn from *Daniel,* the greateſt Number is laſt; and if we multiply, as in *Daniel,* by Ten times ten, it will ſwell to almoſt an infinite Number: But theſe Things are moſt uncertain.

As for the other Difficulties that ariſe from the Angelick Natures, by which they cannot fall under any of our Senſes, they have little or no Weight in them, ſeeing it cannot be refuſed but Angels make oftentimes viſible Appearances; which they do, by aſſuming a Body of condenſed Air, which no doubt they may eaſily adapt to themſelves after what Figure beſt ſuits their Purpoſe: This is enough to make them viſible, and it is no leſs eaſy for them ſo to order the Motion of the Air, that it may convey Sounds to our Ears; As alſo, by the ſame Means, they can ſo order as it be either louder or ſofter, as they pleaſe: And that here it is ſaid, They *praiſed God,* or the *Lamb with a loud Voice,* is to ſhew they were very hearty in this Exerciſe.

II. There is the Matter of the Angels Praiſe. It is certainly the ſame Perſon they praiſe, whom the living Creatures and Elders had praiſed; for they begin with the ſame Character of him, *Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain*: Which we explained above. Then they proceed to ſhew what he is worthy of; where they mention ſeven Particu-

lars, the ſame Number with the Churches, Horns, and Eyes: But that they ſhould be conſidered relatively, I fear would ſavour too much of the Itch of groundleſs Curioſity. I own it would caſt up a very beautiful Diſplay of Chriſt's Royal Excellencies, in the ſeveral Ages of the Church: We are not to doubt, but all theſe are Grounds of Praiſe in all the Ages of the ſame, and ſome of them may be more manifeſted at one Time than another; yet to ſay the Angels could adapt theſe to the ſeveral Periods, without a ſpecial Revelation, will be no leſs forward to raiſe their Knowledge, than it is raſh for the Periodiſts to determine the Periods. I ſhall however view them ſeparately.

1. *Power*, which ſignifies Vertue or Efficacy, *i. e.* a Power to do and effectuate what he pleaſeth. It has more in it than a bare Right or Authority, tho' that alſo be boundleſs; For *he has Power over all Fleſh*, John xvii. 2. It alſo points at the Succeſs of his Efforts, no Piece of Work is marr'd in his Hands.

2. *Riches*, i. e. true Riches, which ſatisfies and contents in Time and to all Eternity: There are *unſearchable Riches* in *Chriſt*, Rom. ii. 4. as of *Goodneſs*, of *Grace*, of *Glory*, of his *Purchaſe*. The whole Elect are deſigned his *Jewels*, Eph. i. 7, 18.

3. *Wiſdom*. This was propheſied of him long before, *Iſa.* lii. 13. *Behold, my Servant ſhall deal prudently; he ſhall be exalted, and extolled, and be very High.* Great was the *Wiſdom* he diſcovered, in the Exerciſe of the Mediatory Office; he knows how to ſuit himſelf to all the Caſes of his People; he knows how to ſpeak a Word in Seaſon to the weary; he can find out, and defeat the Stratagems of his Enemies.

4. *Strength*. He is the Power of God, againſt whom none can prevail; he is able to preſerve his own, and none ſhall pluck them out of his Hand; he is able to ſubdue the ſtouteſt Sinner, and break in Pieces the moſt daring Enemies, *Col.* ii. 15. *He ſpoiled Principalities and Powers, and made a Shew of them openly, triumphing over them on the Croſs.*

5. *Honour*. This points at the *Majeſty* of the *King of Saints*, to whom *God has given a Name that is above every Name that is named. That at the Name of Jeſus every Knee ſhould bow*, Eph. i. 21. Philip. ii. 9, 10.

6. *Glory*: Which may reſpect the glorious State to which he is exalted in Heaven, at the *Father's Right-hand*; or the Glory and Increaſe of his Kingdom on the Earth, to which all other Kingdoms ſhall give Place, according to that Prophecy, *Iſa.* ii. 2. *It ſhall come to paſs, in the laſt Days, that the Mountain of the Lord's Houſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed in the Top of the Mountains, and ſhall be exalted above the Hills, and all Nations ſhall flow unto it.*

7. *Bleſſing*. This Word is uſed in Scripture to ſignify two Things, 1. The ſuitable Supplies granted to others by a beneficent Hand: Thus Chriſt is ſaid to *bleſs every one of his People, in turning them from their Iniquities*, Acts iii. 26. 2. The great Senſe theſe who meet with Largeſſes, have of the Benefactor's Bounty, *Job* xxxi. 20. *If his Loins have not bleſſed me.*

We would next notice the *Difference* betwixt the Praiſe of the Elders and living Creatures, and the Praiſe of the Angels, in theſe Two;

1. The Angels do not acknowledge Chriſt for their Redeemer, as the others did: The plain Reaſon is, The fallen Angels were excluded from ſuch a Mercy, and the ſtanding Ones did not need it; and therefore it is ſaid, *Heb.* ii. 16. *He took not on him the Nature of Angels.*

2. Tho' the Angels had not the *Redeeming Love of Chriſt* towards themſelves to magnify, yet they had great Benefit and Advantage by the Death of Chriſt; as, 1. The Diſcovery of the *grand Myſtery of Godlineſs, God manifeſted in the Fleſh*, which the Apoſtle tells, was *ſeen of Angels*, 1 Tim. iii. 16. 2. They had Confirmation in that happy State wherein they are, and by Chriſt were made infallible; and therefore he is called the *Head of Angels*. 3. They ſaw *God's Mercy* and *Condeſcenſion* towards Man glorified; and a Part of that Piece of the Creation, moſt a-kin to themſelves, brought from the Jaws of eternal Deſtruction. 4. They had hereby a new Piece of honourable Imployment, to guard the Saints while in the Fleſh, and afterwards conduct them to the heavenly Manſions.

13 And every Creature which is in Heaven, and on the Earth, and under the Earth, and ſuch as are in the Sea, and all that are in them, heard I ſaying, Bleſſing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power, be unto him that ſitteth on the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

14 And the four Beaſts ſaid, Amen. And the four and twenty Elders fell down and worſhipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

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In this we have the Praiſe of all the Creation, not named before, backt by the living Creatures and the Elders. In this univerſal Praiſe, we ſhall notice the Deſcription of theſe who praiſe, and the Matter of their Praiſe.

I. We have theſe who praiſe, diſtribute in *four Claſſes*, which make a very full Enumeration: About the Meaning of all which there is little Debate, except what is made by the *Papiſts*, without any Reaſon. I conſider them ſeparately.

1. *Every Ceature which is in Heaven.* Which ſeems not to be ſpoken of the Imperial Heavens, Angels being the Inhabitants thereof; or, if it be, then theſe who are there are the Spirits of juſt Men made Perfect; but then their Praiſes would be much akin to that of the *Beaſts* and *Elders*: And therefore it is generally underſtood of the *Aerial* Heavens; and, by the Inhabitants there, they mean the Birds of the Air, who are ſaid to ſpeak by a *Proſopopeia*, as *Day and Night are ſaid to utter Speech*, Pſal. xix. 2. and as *Sun and Moon are ſaid to praiſe God.*

2. Theſe which *are on the Earth*: Which ſome think to be meant of all the Race of Mankind out of the Church; others add to them all the unreaſonable Part of the Creation, as well inanimate as animate.

3. Such as are *under the Earth.* Whereby ſome underſtand *impure Spirits* condemned to the Bottomleſs-pit; others, all Metals, Minerals, and Animals that live under the Earth, by the former Figure.

4. Such as are *in the Sea*, i. e. Fiſhes great and ſmall: And, to compleat the Enumeration, it is added, *And ſuch as are in them.* This is a prophetick Stile, and muſt be ſo underſtood; for moſt of theſe Creatures mentioned are unfit for this Exerciſe, becauſe void of Reaſon, and many of them want Senſe; yet it is common to aſcribe ſomething that looks like Reaſon and Senſe, to theſe Creatures that have neither. We know that a Curſe fell on all the Creatures by the Sin of Man, *They were made ſubject to Vanity*, Rom. viii. 20, 22. This was heavy to them, and therefore they are ſaid *to groan.* So here they are ſaid to ſing, as elſewhere, *Pſal.* xcvi. 11, 12. *Let the Heavens rejoice, and the Earth be glad; let the Sea roar, and the Fulneſs thereof*, &c. The Reaſon is, becauſe as by the *firſt Adam* the Curſe was brought upon all theſe Creatures, ſo by the *ſecond Adam* it is alleviate.

II. The Matter of their Praiſe is the ſame with what the Angels had ſaid before, at leaſt ſo far: And they aſcribe their Praiſe *to him that ſits on the Throne, and to the Lamb*; whereby is aſſerted the Deity of Chriſt, as being one with the Father. If this is to have its fulleſt Senſe, when the meridian Sun-ſhine of the Goſpel will obtain, after the Fall of *Babylon*, as a great many, not without Reaſon, incline to believe; then we might here notice how agreeable theſe four are to the then Fruitfulneſs will appear in them far above what they are now; and all this flowing from what they extol in God and in the Lamb: As, 1. They will be bleſſed with an extraordinary Fruitfulneſs. 2. This was all to the Honour of God. 3. To encourage his Saints to praiſe him. 4. It is an owning their Fruitfulneſs does not flow from themſelves, but God.

The laſt Thing in this Chapter is the Conſort of the firſt with the laſt. 1. The four Beaſts ſay *Amen* to the Praiſe of both the Angels and the other Creatures, which is their hearty Approbation thereof. 2. The Elders, they fall down and worſhip, that the Harmony is ſo great amongſt all the Creatures, in owning and obeying God that ſits on the Throne, and the Lamb, who both *live for ever and ever.*

CHAP. VI.

WE have already ſeen an Emblem of the Church of God upon Earth, and how the ſame is enriched and adorned with the gracious and powerful Preſence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; together with the Soul-upmaking Bleſſings that flow from each of them to the Church in general, and every particular Member thereof; and which they ſhall never be deprived of in all Ages of the World. We ſaw alſo the Charter of the Church's Holding, which contains a full Account of all ſhe is to do and ſuffer while ſhe is below the Sun; which will ſufficiently juſtify her Deſignation, while here, to be a *Militant Church.*

Now the *Viſion* goes on; and Chriſt having obtained the Book, comes, in this Chapter, to open ſix of the ſeven Seals, where we have the Flock of Chriſt brought into the Field of Battle, and her bloody Enemies let looſe againſt her: This is done, on Purpoſe to try his People, and that he may give them Proofs of his Power, Care, and Faithfulneſs; for this is the wonted Method God has taken with his Church,

whom he ſtill made victorious over all her Ememies, however powerful, cunning, and cruel they were. We ſhall view all theſe Seals as they are opened, and begin with the firſt.

SEAL I.

1 AND I ſaw when the Lamb had opened one of the Seals, and I heard as it were the Noiſe of Thunder, one of the four Beaſts ſaying, Come and ſee.

2 And I ſaw, and behold, a white Horſe, and he that ſat on him had a Bow, and a Crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

IN this we have deſcribed the *firſt* Spring of the *Goſpel-Church*, which tho' it had been near a Century in the World, and been ſpread to all Corners of the Earth; yet, while *John* had this Viſion, it was in a moſt languiſhing Condition, and its Enemies hop'd to extirpate it out of the Earth. That we may have the clearer View of what was diſcovered to *John* upon the *Opening* of this *Seal*, I ſhall notice, 1. The Solemnity preparatory to the Viſion, *v.* 1. 2. The Viſion itſelf, *v.* 2.

I. There are the *Preparatives* to the Viſion with great Solemnity, and that as they affected the Prophet's *Eye* and his *Ear*.

1. That which he ſaw, *The Lamb open one of the Seals*. It is plain, from what follows in the Numeration of the other Seals, this was the *firſt*; for the reſt are orderly counted, ſecond, third, *&c.* which is alſo very agreeable to the Scripture-Way of Speaking: And by this ſame Apoſtle, *John* xx. 1. τη δε μια τωνσαββατων, *i. e.* in one of the Days of the Week, yet is rightly tranſlated the *firſt Day of the Week*; for that was the Day in which our Lord roſe from the Dead, as the parallel Texts, *viz. Matth.* xxviii. 1. *Mark* xvi. 2. prove; and therefore, by this firſt Seal, we are to underſtand the outmoſt. It was opened by the *Lamb*, and thereby he anſwers the Expectations of the Church. And *John*, who had been honoured with many Manifeſtations, was alſo allowed to witneſs this; and therefore he ſays, *I ſaw when the Lamb opened*, &c. Here alſo the Lamb gave a full Evidence of his own Worthineſs.

2. We have that which affected his Ears, a great Noiſe, deſcribed from its Reſemblance, *As it were the Noiſe of Thunder*; and from the Author of it, *One of the four Beaſts*; and laſtly from the Words it uttered, *Come and ſee*. Some think that theſe Words followed the *Noiſe like Thunder*, and that either the Thunder had not an *articulate Voice*, or elſe *John* has not committed it to Writing. This is plainly to thwart the Conſtruction; for he tells us plainly, the thundering Noiſe was one of the Beaſts uttering theſe two Words, *Come and ſee*. Others tell us, This Voice was only deſigned to rouze *John* to view the Viſion in the next Verſe, but that there is nothing emblematical in it; however, they bring no Reaſon for this, and there is this againſt it, a leſs Voice than that of Thunder would have been ſufficient to fix the Attention of our *Prophet*, whoſe eager Deſire of ſeeing the *Seals opened*, was ſufficient to gain his cloſeſt Obſervation. To find out then the Meaning of this, I ſhall make a few Remarks.

(1.) This was the firſt of the living Creatures that had this Voice, which will be plain from the foregoing Rule of Interpretation; for the other three are orderly mentioned afterwards, as ſecond, third, *&c.* Now this firſt Beaſt is ſaid to *be like a Lion*; which, if it ſignify any Thing, muſt be the Character of that *Miniſtry* were honoured firſt to propagate the Goſpel: This we accounted for before, *Chap.* v. 7.

(2.) The Noiſe of this living Creature is ſaid to be *like Thunder*. A *Lion roaring* has a very terrible Voice, and *Prophets* have been compared to Lions of old, *Amos* iii. 8. *The Lion hath roar'd, who will not fear? the Lord hath ſpoken, who can but propheſy?* But the Voice of Thunder is more terrible, yet our Lord deſigns two of his Apoſtles *Sons of Thunder*, Mark iii. 17. And we may, among other Things, think theſe few Particulars to be repreſented of that firſt *Miniſtry*, 1. The Suddenneſs of the Voice, for ſo is Thunder. 2. The Swiftneſs: The Noiſe of Thunder quickly goes thorow the whole Heavens; and Chriſt tells us, his Coming in the Power of the Goſpel, *would be like Lightning flying from the one End under Heaven, to the other End under Heaven.* 3. The Awfulneſs of the Voice, it ſtrikes with Terror: And indeed

indeed this was moſt true in the *firſt Miniſtry*, when they had the extraordinary Gifts of the *Holy Ghoſt* poured out upon them.

(3.) The Voice of this living Creature, which is common to them all, *Come and ſee*. It is not probable this Voice was only deſigned for *John*, for his Diſtance could not be great, ſeeing he perfectly ſaw the *Seal opened*; and, if we ſhould imagine it directed to him, then it will follow, he was to ſhift Places at each of the four Seals, tho' there be no Mention of the *Lamb*'s changing his Place, which we found was in the Midſt of the Throne: And therefore we may look upon it as a Call to all the Church, and to as many as God ſhould call. That the Words are in the ſingular Number, is no more than what we find common in the whole Scripture, even when the Call is moſt general, as we ſee in the ten Commands: The firſt of theſe, *Come*, invites to a near Approach, and ſuppoſeth the Called at a Diſtance. The ſecond is a Call to ſerious Conſideration, and to view the Thing on all Sides, and ſpeaks the Greatneſs of the Object. 'Tis plain theſe living Creatures were not *Papiſts*, for they make it their Buſineſs to keep the People in Ignorance.

II. There is the Viſion itſelf, *v.* 2. In this Emblem, which no Doubt was diſcovered after the Voice, and immediately too, we are to notice its two general Parts, a *Horſe*, and *his Rider*; this is common to the following three Seals, but yet there is great Difference betwixt both the *Horſes* and *their Riders*, which I ſhall notice as I come at them.

1. The firſt Part of the Emblem is a *white Horſe*. All was diſcovered to *John* in *Types*; the *Lamb*, tho' he opened the Book, yet did not read any Thing out of it, but in a dark Manner, in Figures, gave *John* to know the Contents thereof: And ſo it is plain theſe are all Prophetical Expreſſions, and may not be taken literally. That we may know this, I ſhall firſt conſider the Horſe, and then his Colour.

(1.) An *Horſe*; this is a Creature well known, and which we find God himſelf give a very lofty Deſcription of, for his Statelineſs, his Swiftneſs, his Fierceneſs, and Fearleſneſs, *Job* xxxix. 19. &c. Nor is this the only Place where he is to be underſtood emblematically; for the Prophet *Zechariah* had a Horſe-man Emblem, *Zech.* i. 8. *He ſaw a Man riding upon a red Horſe*; the Meaning whereof he enquired, and had in Return, *Theſe are they whom the Lord hath ſent to go to and fro through the Earth*. So that, wherever he is taken figuratively, we are to underſtand thereby a *Meſſenger* ſent of God; and, to be ſure, we are to mean the ſame Thing here.

(2.) His Colour, he is *White*; not only to diſtinguiſh him from the following three, but alſo to compleat the Emblem, and is expreſſive of *Beauty* and *Purity*. Some ſay, When a Triumph was allowed any of the *Roman Generals*, they rode always upon a *white Horſe*: Whatever be of that, we are ſure a *Conqueror* rode upon this Horſe; and ſo they are out of it, who would have this Horſe an Emblem of Peace.

2. There is the *Rider*, who has no Marks given of his *Countenance*, or other *perſonal Characters*; probably, becauſe *John* had ſeen him before, in the firſt Chapter; or, ſuch a View of him was concealed from him, till the laſt Engagement of this victorious *Rider* was to be repreſented to him, *Chap.* xix. However, we have him here deſcribed,

(1.) From his Weapon, he *had a Bow*; which will comprehend a Quiver with Arrows: This was a moſt ordinary Piece of Armour of old, and did much Execution; yea, it is a Weapon will kill at a great Diſtance, if the Shooter be ſtrong.

(2.) From the Badge of his Greatneſs, *A Crown was given unto him*. He could receive a Crown from none but him that ſat on the Throne; and we find, he is crown'd before he conquers, for he firſt gets the *Crown*, and then he *went out*. This ſays one of two, if not both, That the Crown was beſtowed upon him for what he had formerly done; And alſo, That the Beſtower had ſuch Confidence in the *Wiſdom* and *Valour* of this *Champion*, that he gave him it as a Pledge of certain *Victory*, and that he ſhould not be defeat.

(3.) His March, *He went out conquering*. We are ſure ſuch a *Conqueror* could only come from God; and ſo it is expreſly ſaid here, He went from where *John* ſaw him, *i. e.* the *Throne of God*: But it is not ſaid whither he went, and therefore we may not reſtrict it. It is not ſaid, He went to this or that Nation, or Place; the Reaſon I conceive is, Becauſe he was to go every where, he was to be an *All-conquering* Prince.

(4.) From the Continuance of his warlick Expeditions, he went *to conquer*. Wherever he march'd, at his firſt Start, either Submiſſion or Slaughter appeared; and he was to hold on at this Rate till all his Enemies were ſubdued, for indeed ſo much is wrapt up in the Word *to conquer*.

From what is ſaid of this Emblem, the Application ſeems to be eaſy, and that the Rider can be none elſe but *our Lord Jeſus* on the *Horſe* of the *Goſpel*: Yet ſome will have the *Roman Empire* to be the *Horſe*, and the *Emperors* one or mo (for they are not agreed) to be the *Rider*; and they will not allow Chriſt to be any Part of the Senſe of

this Emblem. But we are ſure the white Horſe is an Emblem of the Goſpel, and that Chriſt is there the Rider, *Chap.* xix. 11. *I ſaw Heaven opened, and, behold, a white Horſe, and he that ſat upon him was called Faithful and True*, &c. And it is not to be ſuppoſed, Chriſt would, on one Occaſion, repreſent *Heathen Emperors* riding proſperouſly on the ſame Horſe himſelf was to mount, in order to extirpate *Idolatry*. Beſides, it is not true of *Rome*, that is ſaid of this Rider, that the whole of their Expeditions were ſucceſsful; for at Length their Kingdom was rent, and then quite razed. And finally, the *white Horſe* can be no Emblem of the *Roman Kingdom*, which was one of the moſt bloody ever the Sun ſhin'd on, and nothing of Purity, but all Manner of Wickedneſs rampant among them.

But, if we carry the Meaning of it the other Way, we will find the Application very plain and eaſy; as, 1. *Goſpel-miniſters*, in the Diſcharge of their Duty, are repreſented by the *white Horſe*, becauſe of their *Speed*, *Intrepidity*, and *Holineſs*. 2. Chriſt the Rider has promiſed his Preſence with them to the End of the World; and as the Rider directs the Horſe, ſo does Chriſt his Miniſters. 3. From his Weapon, which ſome make an Argument againſt this Senſe, becauſe we often read that Chriſt has a *Sword*, but never that he has a Bow. However, it is as certain that they are miſtaken, as that they aſſert it; for we find him armed with both Sword and Bow, in that famous Prophecy of him, *Pſal.* xlv. 3. *Gird thy Sword upon thy Thigh*. And, *v.* 5. *Thine Arrows are ſharp in the Heart of the King's Enemies*. And it is a very fit Emblem of Chriſt's Arms or Weapons; for it will ſhoot at a Diſtance, and by which the Archer will artfully hit the Mark; its Motion is very ſwift, and gives many a Time a mortal Wound. How fully does this repreſent the Word of Chriſt, accompanied with his Spirit, for Conviction and Converſion? A notable Inſtance whereof, was given at the Sermon of *Peter*, where his Hearers *were pricked at the Heart*, Acts ii. 37. and no leſs of his Judgment upon the Obſtinate. 4. From his *Crown*, which repreſents that excellent Majeſty the Father inveſted him with, as the Reward of his former victorious Expeditions, for which, he tells, he was *ſet down upon his Father's Throne*; and alſo, becauſe of his Cheerfulneſs to undertake this Expedition. 5. From his March in a victorious Manner, which we cannot explain in more ſignificant and appoſite Terms, than the Pſalmiſt has done before to the ſame Purpoſe, *Pſal.* xlv. 4. *In thy Majeſty ride proſperouſly, becauſe of Truth, and Meekneſs, and Righteouſneſs; and thy Right-hand ſhall teach thee terrible Things*. 6. From his continued Succeſs. Some Kings riſe ſuddenly, and fall as quickly; but his Kingdom is an *everlaſting Kingdom*: It does indeed make *ſlow*, but very *ſure* Advances; *for he muſt reign till he put all Enemies under his Feet*, 1 Cor. xv. 25.

It may be here queſtioned, When did this Horſe with his Rider go out? I anſwer, He was already gone out, and conquering before the Viſion, and was yet perſiſting in his Expeditions, and purſuing his Purpoſes. It began with the Miniſtry of *John* the *Baptiſt*, was enlarged further by himſelf, and diffuſed broad and wide with his Apoſtles Endeavours, and after them was propagate by faithful *Goſpel-miniſters*, and will continue to prevail, till *all the Kingdoms of the Earth ſhall become the Kingdom of our Lord, and of his Chriſt*. We read of this Horſe *going out*, but no Account of his Return; nor indeed will there be any Return, till all the Elect be gathered in. It is then a vain Thing to eſtabliſh Periods; for, according to them, the Propagation of the Goſpel ſhould ceaſe as ſoon as this is over. I own, this is a Concluſion they will not admit; but then they do not underſtand this Seal of Chriſt's carrying on his own Work.

Object. Seeing Chriſt is the *Lamb* that opens the Seals, how can we ſuppoſe him to be the *Rider* upon the firſt Horſe? there are not two Chriſts.

Anſw. It is very uſual, eſpecially in this Prophecy, to repreſent the ſame Thing by different Emblems, but ſtill for ſeveral Reaſons, and diverſe Purpoſes. And it is particularly true of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; for he was repreſented in all his *three Mediatory Offices*, Chap. i. He is again pointed out in his *Prieſtly Office*, under the Emblem of a *Lamb ſlain*, Chap. v. And as the *Rider* upon this *firſt Horſe*, he is repreſented both as the great *Prophet*, and *King* of his Church.

Theſe Things are what I have found moſt ſolid and comforting about this firſt Seal; and for Evidence, it ſeems fairly to claim the Precedence of any other Opinion about it.

SEAL II.

3 And when he had opened the ſecond Seal, I heard the ſecond Beaſt ſay, Come and ſee.

4 And

4 And there went out another Horſe *that was* red: And *Power* was given to him that ſat thereon, to take Peace from the Earth, and that they ſhould kill one another; and there was given to him a great Sword.

THIS is a Continuation of the *Viſion*: As ſoon as the firſt Emblem is off, there is another, but, to be ſure, of a quite different Nature; for the *Goſpel* is no ſooner ſent out to proclaim *Salvation* to the Ends of the Earth, but ſeveral bitter Enemies are ſet after it, the firſt of which, I think, we have is this. We have nothing to explain in the firſt Part, which is introductory, but the Application of the *ſecond Living Creature*. Some think the ſame Quality of the Voice ſhould be reſerved in this, as is expreſſed in the former; to be ſure, there muſt be an Allowance of as much Difference in the Voice as in the Creatures: Nor am I for adding where the Text does not; and if the Equality of the Voice had been the ſame with the former, it might be expected the Text ſhould have declared ſo much, eſpecially that it fails not to take Notice of the Identity of the Matter of it, for both ſaid, *Come and ſee*.

Theſe who would have theſe living Creatures to be Angels, are at a Loſs what to make of this orderly Mention made of them; and at laſt tell us, No Regard is to be had to it, as containing any Thing in the Prophecy obſervable; and that all was ſaid to *John*, and the Church no further concerned than to know Angels took Care he ſhould not ſlumber between Hands. Should this be admitted, I ſee not why we may not treat a great Part of the Prophecy the ſame Way, and that purely to ſerve a Turn of Thought: For, were theſe Angels for no other End, one might have given *John* the Watch-word all the While, and not four be employed by Turns; and we find, after the firſt *four Seals* are opened, there is none of them ſpeaks one Word: Nor hear we of any Reaſon for it, tho' I am ſure the Threed of the Prophecy allows a very good one, *viz.* becauſe there were no more *Living Creatures* but *four*; yet it cannot be ſaid, there were no more Angels: And as little can it be offered, there was leſs Need to excite *John* to notice the laſt *three;* more than the *firſt four* Seals. Upon the Whole, then, I think, we may conclude, there is ſomething more wrapt up in theſe living Creatures, than ſome would perſwade us: Nor can I ſee how better we can apply this one, than we did the firſt, and underſtand thereby the Goſpel-miniſtry.

But, if we allow not of Periods, how will we account for their orderly Succeſſion to one another? This may be eaſily accommodate, either by allowing a Miniſtry of the Nature we explained this Emblem, *Chap.* iv. to be added to the former; or elſe allow the ſame Miniſtry who are compared to a *Lion*, upon the Appearance of this firſt Enemy, to be bleſſed with the *Patience* and *Conſtancy* of the *Bullock*: However their Patience did not hinder them to give ſeaſonable Warning when the Enemy took the Field.

We proceed now to the Emblem that appeared to *John* when the *ſecond Seal* was *opened*; where we ſhall notice, as in the firſt Emblem, theſe two Parts, 1. The Horſe. 2. His Rider.

1. The *Horſe*, an Emblem of the ſame Kind with the former: And, that we took the firſt Horſe as the Emblem of a Body of People under the Management of one, we cannot do leſs here; and beſides, they coming under this Figure, tell us they are bold, ſwift and ſtout. Yet that they are not theſe repreſented by the firſt Horſe, is plain from the Text: For,

(1.) It is ſaid, This Horſe is *another*; i. e. not only diverſe, but unlike, except as to the general Notion: After this Word of Diverſification, I ſee not how any can make the ſeveral *four Horſes* ſignify the ſame Thing, but in different Conditions; for then it might have been ſaid, The ſame Horſe came out, but of another Colour: Beſides, it is evident, the *firſt Horſe* went out, and did not return; ſo that it is not the ſame, but a different Sort of People is to be meant here.

(2.) This Horſe was *Red*, which is very unlike *White*: This is a very ſtrange Colour of a Horſe, and which we nowhere read of in Scripture but emblematially, ſometimes by the Prophet *Zechariah*, Chap. i. 8. and Chap. vi. 2. From both theſe Places it is very plain they were very warlick Horſes, and for Deſtruction. Nor is it reaſonable to take it in another Senſe here: And indeed, wherever we read of *Red* in a Prophetick Way, it ſignifies either *Guilt* or *Blood*; ſo we read in *Iſaiah*, Chap. i. of *Scarlet* and *Crimſon* Sins: And, when our Lord is deſcribed as taking Vengeance on his Enemies, he is ſaid to come *from* Edom, *with Garments dyed red*, Iſa. lxiii. 1, 3. And it is plain, *he had ſtained them in the Blood of his Enemies*. Yet it would be unreaſonable

to imagine Chriſt to be meant in this *Figure*, but to be ſure an Enemy of his, as we we will ſee when we come to conſider,

2. The *Rider*, that is, he that has the Government and Management of theſe meant by the *Horſe*; where we have his *Power*, and his *Tool*.

(1) He ſeems to have a Commiſſion or Power. It is true the Word *Power* is not in the Original, but we have it added, *v.* 8. to as miſchievous an Agent. It is ſimply ſaid, *It was given to him*: Now, to be ſure, we cannot imagine he had it from any other *Hand* but his who ſat upon the *Throne*; for *all Powers that be, are of God*. But then his Power is very terrible, *to take Peace from the Earth*; ſo that he was ſent to the Earth after the former Rider: And it was not in this or that Corner of the Earth, but in general through the whole Earth, he was to be the Author of much Confuſion. But that is not all; for the Enmity he was to kindle was to be deadly, *that they ſhould kill one another*. I cannot ſay but the Remark is good by a learned Author, That this Word σφαξω did not ſignify Slaughter in fair Battle, but a more private Way; and ſo ſometimes it ſignifies to murder, as it is ſaid of *Cain*, 1 John iii. 12. *He ſlew his Brother*. Sometimes it ſignifies to ſacrifice; and ſo it is ſaid of Chriſt, *Chap.* v. 9. *Thou waſt ſlain*, or ſacrificed: As we are ſure the Word muſt be rendred in *Stephen*'s laſt Speech, *Acts* vii. 42. *Have ye offered to me ſlain Beaſts and Sacrifices?* Some tell us alſo, it is uſed to expreſs the Execution of the Sentence of Juſtice; But I cannot find it in this Senſe in the New Teſtament: But, it is owned, the ſecond is the moſt common Acceptation, and this ſays, They were to kill one another after the Form of a Religion, at leaſt what they believed to be Religion.

(2.) The Tool he got, *And there was given unto him a great Sword*. As for the Word rendred *Sword*, it is indifferently taken for an Inſtrument of War or Juſtice, as the Magiſtrate is ſaid *not to have the Sword in vain*, Rom. xiii. 4. where it is certainly the Badge of Power, and Inſtrument of Juſtice: But then the Difficulty lies in the Addition of *Great*, which may indeed note a ſovereign Power, whereof the *Sword*, and eſpecially a *great Sword*, is the Enſign.

From this Explication of the Words it ſeems plain, we cannot apply them to the Goſpel, as the Author of much Confuſion and Diſorder in the World, according to Chriſt's Word, *Mat.* x. 34, 35. *Think not that I am come to ſend Peace on Earth; I am not come to ſend Peace, but a Sword: For I am come to ſet a Man at Variance againſt his Neighbour*, &c. For here it is ſaid, the *Horſe* is *red*, that is, *bloody*; which in no Senſe can be ſaid of the Goſpel, or the Profeſſors thereof: And, if Confuſions be occaſioned by the Goſpel, this is not to be aſcribed to the *Author* of the *Goſpel*, who is the *Prince of Peace*; nor to the Goſpel, which is the Goſpel of Peace; nor yet to the true Profeſſors thereof, for they are the Children of Peace. Again, the *Rider* on this *Red Horſe*, is ſaid actively to take Peace from the Earth; which Chriſt never did, or deſigned: But, that the Goſpel is the Cauſe of Diſſention, is owing to the Corruptions of Men; beſides, ſacrificing of Men out of a religious Intent, was never the Practice of theſe who own the Goſpel.

Others again, by this Emblem, underſtand the *Roman* Wars againſt the *Jews*, which, they think, were fomented by the *Chriſtians*. But this is to ſpeak very hardly of the Diſciples of the *holy Jeſus*, and without all Warrant; beſides, the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* was over before this Viſion.

Others carry it down to the Inundation of the *Northern Nations* upon the *Roman Empire*, in which was much Blood ſhed on all Hands. But, if we would ſpeak according the Scope of this Prophecy, we will not find the Deſign of it to account for the Revolutions of States, or Seditions in particular Kingdoms or Empires, but to relate the State of the Church, and the Enemies ſhe hath to grapple with, till they be all taken out of the Way; and ſo this Senſe is alſo too narrow.

Others again, by this Rider, underſtand *Satan* the grand Enemy of the Church, who is repreſented by a *great red Dragon*, Chap. xii. This indeed comes neareſt the Truth; yet I cannot think this is to be underſtood of the *Devil* perſonally, as theſe incline to do, tho' we may well allow him to have the great Part of the Work for his own Share: But the Emblem of the Horſe, bids us look for a Sett of Men whom he manages, or that are managed by ſome, one or more, whom he has at his Devotion, and who have the Face of Power and Government in the Earth. And, we will find, the firſt Thing that attack'd Chriſtianity, after its Riſe in the World, was *Heatheniſm*; and ſo the Devil managed all the *Heathen* Powers, eſpecially theſe of *Rome*, that for a long Time they were the only Enemies the Church had to grapple with, except *Hereticks* now and then, who ſtruck in commonly when Perſecution ceaſed: So that they are not far out of it, who make that great Enemy *Satan* the *Rider*; for indeed he was, and is worſhipped, wherever *Paganiſm* did, or does prevail; And yet, to make this *Beelzebub*, as a Spirit,

Spirit, the Truth of this Emblem, would be to confound all the reſt of the *Beaſts* and their *Riders*, ſeeing he certainly actuates them all, and does now *Mahometaniſm* and *Popery*, as much as ever he did *Heatheniſm*. Now, to this Senſe of the Figure we will find all the Parts agree; As, 1. The *Redneſs* of the *Horſe* points out the Cruelty of the *Heathens*, not only againſt the *Chriſtians*, but even againſt *one another*. 2. This came out immediately after the Goſpel; tho' *Heatheniſm* was in the World long before *Chriſtianity*, yet, no ſooner did the Goſpel appear, but immediately the *Heathen* attacked it furiouſly, and was the firſt common Enemy ever the Church had, after the *Jews*. 3. The *Roman Empire* did take Peace from the Earth, and, without any Reaſon, ſtretched their Conqueſts to all the known Parts of the World, and was the Author of all Manner of Diſorder. 4. Amongſt the *Heathen* it was very uſual to immolat Men, and had prophane Sights by their *Gladiators*; and all this, beſides the Blood was ſhed in the Field of Battle. 5. There was a Sword given to the ſame, (taking Sword as a Badge of Authority) and it may be juſtly called a great One, for in its Time the *Empire* of *Rome* was the greateſt upon the Face of the Earth.

Tho' this was in Part known in *John*'s Time, yet the Whole of the Matter was not known; and beſides, the *Horſe* with his *Rider* had a great deal further of his Courſe to go, and is not, to this Day, quite extirpate; But that there remains much of it in the Earth, tho' not ſo formidable now as of old. From the whole of this, I ſee not how a ſhorter Period can be made of this, than till the Time comes *Satan will be bound.*

SEAL III.

5 And when he had opened the third Seal, I heard the third Beaſt ſay, Come and ſee. And I beheld, and lo, a black Horſe, and he that ſat upon him had a Pair of Balances in his Hand.

6 And I heard a Voice in the Midſt of the four Beaſts ſay, A Meaſure of Wheat for a Peny, and three Meaſures of Barley for a Peny, and ſee thou hurt not the Oil and the Wine.

THE ſecond *Horſe* and his *Rider* being gone, the Church is not to flatter herſelf ſhe has no more Enemies to grapple with; for ſuddenly out ſtarts a ſecond, and one more miſchievous than the other: For *Satan* had now hatched this Child of his, after another Manner than the former, yet as like himſelf as it; for as he was a Murderer from the Beginning, ſo his firſt Effort was to deſtroy: But that failing, he was alſo a Liar, and ſo he muſt have a Child in his own Likeneſs this Way; which I take to be the Meaning of the Emblem in this *third Seal.*

There is little to notice in the Introduction of this, different from what we had in the other two, but the Application of the third Beaſt, which, *Chap.* iv. 7. is ſaid to have a *Face like a Man*; the Senſe whereof, I gave on the Place. And to be ſure, if ever the Church had need of wiſe and ſagacious Miniſters, it was now, when this *black Horſe* with his *Rider* ſet out; for his Footſteps are not ſo eaſily traced as the other: And we may account for the Riſe of this Qualification, the ſame Way as for the former.

In the Emblem we have two Parts, 1. What *John* ſaw. 2. What he heard.

I. We have what *John* ſaw, *v.* 5. The *Horſe* and his *Rider.*

1. There is the Emblem of a *Horſe* here, as in the other two; but of a different Hue, for he is ſaid to be *black.* This, the Generality of Expoſitors would have to be an Emblem of Famine: And, I am ready to believe that which moved them to this, is becauſe we hear of the Rate of Vivers; but it will appear there is no ſuch Thing in the next Verſe. Others again would have it to ſignify Grief and Sadneſs, becauſe that alters the lively Colour of the Countenance, as well as Hunger: And, to fortify this, they bring the Words of *Jeremiah*, Lam. iv. 7, 8. *Her Nazarites were purer than Snow, whiter than Milk*, &c. *Their Viſage is blacker than a Coal, their Skin cleaveth to their Bones, it is withered, it is become like a Stick.* However many Inſtances be brought from Scripture (and indeed the Learned have collected a deal) to illuſtrate this; yet they all ſpeak of the Change of the Complection, in which Senſe it is very true: But it is not fair, becauſe ſuch a Colour ſignifies ſuch a Thing upon a Change, therefore to conclude it muſt ſignify the ſame Thing tho' there be no Change. Now this Type is a *ſeveral Horſe* from the other two, and not one of them altered in Colour;

and therefore I preſume, to make this Colour ſignify *Scarcity* or Famine, becauſe Hunger makes the Countenance black, is a very looſe Way of Reaſoning. Beſides, we find Blackneſs uſed in Scripture to point out Excellency or Beauty, *Song* v. 11. *His Locks are buſhy and black as a Raven*: And indeed ſome contend this is the Deſign of it here. 'Tis however certain, that *Blackneſs* does not always ſignify Hunger. *Zechariah* will help us out with this a little, from his Viſion, *Zech.* vi. 2. *In the ſecond Chariot were black Horſes.* Yet none ever thought the Colour of theſe Horſes ſignified Dearth or Famine; tho' it be generally believed theſe black Horſes did ſignify ſome dark and ſad Diſpenſation, which, I doubt not, may be alſo the Meaning of this *black Horſe* in our Text. And that which appears to be the moſt probable is, That Error and Hereſies are meant thereby. That God in his Providence lets looſe ſuch in the World, to try the Sincerity and Stedfaſtneſs of his own, is plain from the Apoſtle's Words, 1 *Cor.* xi. 19. *There muſt alſo be Hereſies among you, that they which are approven may be made manifeſt.* And that this black Horſe ſignifies Errors, I offer theſe few Reaſons, 1. Becauſe of their black and ſad Nature; for they are black Clouds, in Oppoſition to the ſincere Milk of the Word. 2. Becauſe they are ſleely brought in, yet faſt enough, 2 *Pet.* ii. 1. *There ſhall be falſe Teachers among you, who privily ſhall bring in damnable Hereſies.* 3. The Colour of this Horſe is oppoſite to the Colour of the Horſe in the firſt Seal, which brings in Truth. 4. God had taken Care to provide his Churches Miniſters ſuitable to their Condition, as in the other two. And here, while theſe Errors are repreſented by an Horſe, it ſhews there will be a Body of Men to propagate them; which they will do broad and wide, and very ſwiftly too, without either Fear or Shame. And finally, that theſe were to be under the Direction of One; which brings to the next Thing,

2. The *Rider*, about whom we have nothing remarkable but one (which however I think will do much to point him out to us) *He had a Pair of Balances in his Hand*; ζυγὸν. How Tranſlators have fallen into this Blunder, I know not, except that we read of Meaſures in the next Verſe; but yet theſe Things were not commonly weighed, if we may believe *Goodwine*. I am ſure the Word is nowhere ſo tranſlated in the New Teſtament, tho' it occurs often, but is ſtill rendred *Yoke*: Nor ſhall the Authority of any ſway me, to alter what is the moſt proper, as well as common, Senſe of the Word; eſpecially, that it facilitates our Way to find out the Meaning of this whole Emblem: For then the Meaning is, this *Rider* has Methods, whereby he chains to himſelf theſe wretched Souls he has overcome by his Errors. The Apoſtle calls the *Jewiſh* Principles (which were good in their Time) when foiſted in among the Truths of Chriſt, *A Yoke which neither we nor our Fathers were able to bear*, Acts xv. 10. And another exhorts, *Be not entangled again with the Yoke of Bondage*, Gal. v. 1.

We may further obſerve here, it is not ſaid the Apoſtle ſaw this Horſe and his Rider go out, as it is ſaid of the other two. It is, I own, generally thought that the Expreſſion *Went out* is neceſſarily underſtood: But I muſt beg Pardon to ſay, I ſee no ſuch Neceſſity; for we found ſome Difference betwixt the firſt and ſecond Emblems, which I ſhewed was reaſonable, and I think the ſame may be ſaid for this. It was a Truth what was ſignified by the firſt two, who were really abroad in the World when *John* had the Viſion; and it is as true the Truth of this Type was not gone out: Tho' Errors were in the Church, yet they were not formed into a Body, and come under one Head, as afterwards. 'Tis true they were brooding, and a great many were ſetting up for themſelves; But afterwards they coaleſced into one common Head, which proving to narrow, they ſprung up under another in the fourth Seal.

What was before advanced upon the *Colour* of the *Horſe*, frees us of the Trouble of examining the Senſe given by ſome, and indeed a great many, that this is the Emblem of *Famine*; which is diverſly twiſted, ſome to one Time, and ſome to another: But no ſuch Thing can be in the Words.

Others again incline to take *Black* in a good Part, and apply it to the ſtable Management of *Severus* and *Commodus*, Emperors of *Rome*. But I ſhewed before, theſe Seals do not concern the particular Emergents of any State, but are deſigned to exhibite to us the Condition of the Church, and the Management of her Enemies againſt her.

Others again make this *Rider* to be Jeſus Chriſt, and the *black Horſe* an Emblem of his *Immutability*, and the *Balances* his equal and holy Juſtice: But, when we conſider the *Balances* muſt be turned to a *Yoke*, this Opinion muſt fall to the Ground.

It ſeems evident, after all, this Emblem applies itſelf, and that it exactly agrees to the Errors of the *Church of Rome*. For, 1. As to the Emblem of the black Horſe, it repreſents their Errors to be many and great, propagate by a Number of Men of perverſe Hearts, which are at no ſmall Pains to tranſmit them with all Speed through the Earth, and has been no ſmall Hinderance to the white Horſe. 2. The Yoke the

Rider

Rider has in his Hand, is a lively Emblem of all theſe *Conſtitutions, Engagements,* and *Rules* are to be obſerved by all in the Communion of *Rome.* 3. That it is not ſaid this Horſe with his Rider *went out,* ſays, That the *Papal Hereſies* were not formed at that Time, but were faſt ripening, and Satan was uſing all his Skill to have his *Rider* an accompliſhed Piece of Wickedneſs. 4. From the Reſtriction laid upon him in the Cloſe of the next Verſe, it is very plain the *Rider* had a good Mind to have hurt every Thing; but God will have the *Wine and Oil ſafe*: So that this Rider muſt be an evil Agent.

II. We have what *John* heard, *v.* 6. It would appear the Emblem is compleat without this; but the Voice is added for the Comfort of the Church, which indeed was moſt ſeaſonable, under ſuch a Diſpenſation ſo ſad and diſmal. Here we ſhall notice, 1. Whence the Voice came. 2. A Proclamation of Comfort to the Church. 3. A ſtrict Inhibition ſerved againſt the Rider on this Horſe, or againſt the Papacy.

1. We are to notice whence the Voice came, *I heard a Voice in the Midſt of the four Beaſts ſay.* This muſt be from the *Throne* where the *Father* and the *Lamb* were, and ſo it muſt be from *either* or *both* of them. Tho' God permit, for holy and wiſe Ends, *Errors* to be broached, yea, and propagate; yet he takes Care Truth ſhall not ſink, nor theſe Hereſies to paſs unbounded. It is not ſaid this Rider got the *Yoke,* but it is ſaid he got Orders to limit and bound himſelf: And, that he ſhould go no further than the *Lamb* pleaſed, he cries after *Satan*; juſt as we find God limits him with reſpect to *Job, All that he hath is in thy Power, but touch not his Life*: So here, he calls to *Satan* and the *Pope, See thou hurt not the Oil and the Wine.*

2. There is a Proclamation, no doubt to the Church, *A Meaſure of Wheat for a Peny, and three Meaſures of Barley for a Peny.* Some think this a Prophecy of Famine, and others of Plenty. The Conſideration of a few Words in this Proclamation, may do much to clear it: As, 1. The Meaſure, χοῖνιξ. We cannot find, with Aſſurance, its preciſe Capacity; but the leaſt I find it computed to be, is as much as will maintain a working Man a whole Day. The Proverb juſtifies this, *Non ſedendum eſt ſuper choenicem,* i. e. A wiſe Man will provide for more than one Day. 2. A *Peny.* It was certainly a ſmall Piece of Money; we find it was the ordinary Wages given for coarſe Labour, as working or digging in a Vineyard; as may be gathered from our Lord's Parable, in which every Labourer *got a Peny for his Day's Work,* Matth. xx. 9. It was properly a *Roman* Coin, and has a *Latine* Name in the Text; and from its Name its Value may be gathered to be the tenth Part of an Ounce of Silver, which would not exceed our Sixpence *Sterling.* 3. Why are *Wheat* and *Barley* mentioned? Becauſe they were the two fineſt Grains in that Country, and the *Wheat* reckoned three Times the Value of the *Barley.* Now it can be no Sign of Famine, when a common Digger can earn as much Money in one Day, as buy a ſufficient Quantity of the beſt Food for his Maintenance a whole Day; yet as much of a coarſer, but wholeſom Food, as would maintain him three: So that this is no Prediction of a *Famine,* as many incline to take it; I ſhall not ſay either it is a Sign of great Plenty.

Yet all this does not let us in to the full Senſe of this Edict; For, in its literal Meaning, it will not connect with the former Emblem: For what Comfort would it be to a poor Church, ready to be drown'd with a Deluge of damnable Errors, to tell her ſhe ſhould not want Wheat and Barley; tho', in the mean Time, ſhe might be in Hazard of ſtarving for the Bread of Life? And therefore we muſt not underſtand this literally, but in a Prophetical Senſe, and ſo ſpiritually. But then the Doctors differ here; for ſome underſtand it of Perſons, and ſome of the precious Truths: There is no doubt it is taken for Believers, as particularly when Chriſt ſays, he will *gather his Wheat into his Garner,* Matth. xiii. 25. where to be ſure the Children of the Truth is to be meant, in Oppoſition to the Tares of the *Devil's* ſowing. But then it would be conſidered, that what makes them the Children of God is the Word of Truth; and this is called *Bread,* becauſe it nouriſhes the Soul as effectually, as Bread does the Body; and ſo it is ſaid, *Matth.* iv. 4. *Man doth not live by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God.* And we ſee *Wheat* uſed as the Emblem of ſpiritual Mercies by the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* cxlvii. 14. *He filleth thee with the fineſt of the Wheat.* As for the other, that of Barley, we find it often joined with Wheat, as the Praiſe and Sign of a fruitful Land; And, which is ſtill to the Purpoſe, when God is commending the Land of *Canaan* to the *Iſraelites,* he calls it *A Land of Wheat and Barley,* Deut. viii. 8. And it is owned on all Hands, that theſe temporal Bleſſings were Figures of ſpiritual Mercies under the New Teſtament Church: Nor need we make any other Difference betwixt them, than what the Apoſtle does betwixt ſome Principles of our holy Faith and others, while he deſigns ſome of them *Milk,* and ſome of them *ſtrong Meat,* 1 Cor. iii. 2. And now the Meaning of this Proclamation

does eaſily caſt up to be this, *q. d.* However throng and growing Error and Hereſy may be (for indeed there will be Plenty of them) yet ſhall there be no Want, nay, nor Scarcity of Truth and ſpiritual Food for all Capacities, to be had too at a very eaſy Rate; yet none can have or hope for it, but ſuch as work. The Truth of this is anſwered exactly, ſince ever the Papal Errors got to any Height; for God never wanted Witneſſes.

3. There is an Inhibition ſerved againſt *Rome*, *And ſee thou hurt not the Oil and the Wine.* This Charge has not only a Certification in it, if that Arch-heretick ſhould contraveen; but it is ſpoken ſpecially to the Church, to aſſure her, Chriſt would effectually reſtrain that *Son of Perdition* from doing any Harm to theſe. Theſe are alſo to be underſtood *Prophetically*; and ſo, whatever is the ſpiritual Senſe of that Prophetick Call given in Chriſt's Name, *Iſa.* lv. 1. *Come to the Waters, buy Wine and Milk*; and whatever is underſtood by *Oil in the Lamps of the wiſe Virgins*, Mat. xxv. 4: that is the true Senſe and Meaning of the Expreſſions here: And theſe are plainly the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit of God in the Hearts of Believers, which *Satan* himſelf ſhall never be able to injure.

It is plain there is, in this Way of explaining this Prophecy, no Room for the Comments of the *Periodiſts*; for this is to continue from the Riſe of that Piece of *Antichriſt*, till all *ſpiritual Babylon* be deſtroyed.

SEAL IV.

7 And when he had opened the fourth Seal, I heard the Voice of the fourth Beaſt ſay, Come and ſee.

8 And I looked, and behold, a pale Horſe, and his Name that ſat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him: And Power was given unto them over the fourth Part of the Earth, to kill with the Sword, and with Hunger, and with Death, and with the Beaſts of the Earth.

IT not being in *Satan's* Power to croud all Miſchief into the Belly of one Monſter the Papacy, he plays the Forge again, and out ſtarts a miſhapen Lump, but a bitter Enemy to the *Church of God*, which the *Lamb* diſcovers to *John* at the Opening of the fourth Seal. In the Introduction we have nothing different from the reſt, but that now the fourth Beaſt calls, *Come and ſee*: And, becauſe this living Creature is compared to a flying Eagle, there are ſome who immediately think of the Eagle's ravenous Nature: And it being a Proverb, *Wherever the Carcaſe is, thither the Eagles are gathered together*; and ſo make this the Figure of ſome Thing that delights in Slaughter, whereof much more was to happen under this Seal. But they ſhould take the whole Emblem with them, and then it would be found a *flying Eagle*, which cannot feed in that Condition; beſides, they ſhould have ſought ſomewhat in the other three like this. And, after all, it is a very hard Thought of any ſo near the *Throne of God*, as theſe four Creatures are repreſented to be, that they ſhould be ſuch as delight in Humane Gore. It will be beſt then, ſtill to take this as an Emblem of a Goſpel-miniſtry: And that they are repreſented by an *Eagle*, is to ſhew how penetrating they are into ſome myſterious Steps of Divine Conduct; And that they are like *flying Eagles*, ſhews their exalted Affections, by which they ſoar aloft; and perhaps their Wings may be an Emblem of ſomething that will contribute to their Safety.

In the Emblem we have, 1. The Horſe. 2. His Rider. 3. The Attendant. And, 4. Their Power.

I. There is the *Horſe*; this is the *fourth* and laſt, and of a different Hue from all the reſt: He is called here *pale*, χλωρὸς; that is a Word very differently rendred, but very ſeldom *pale*, and never in Scripture but in this Place. They ſhould certainly have corrected that Paſſage, where our Lord commands the People to ſit down by Companies on the *green Graſs*, Mark vi. 39. and rendred it *pale Graſs*. The ſame Way however do the Septuagint expreſs it, *They were as the green Herb, and as the Graſs upon the Houſe-top.* Others again, to get the Colour of this Horſe, upon which they think much depends, ſeek it out of *Zechariah's* Viſion, *Zech.* vi. 3. where we have alſo four Sorts of Horſes, black, white, red, and the laſt is rendred *grizled*: And ſo, here they would have this *Horſe*, not of *one* Colour like the other three, but to be *variega-*

ted

ted; and they ſtill labour to fetch it from the Word in the Text, which, they think, ſignifies half-withered Graſs, where there is ſome green, ſome pale, and ſome yellow. However, I ſee not how it ſhould be *pale* in this Place, unleſs it be becauſe *Death* is ſaid to be *Rider*: But it would be conſider'd, that Paleneſs is the *Effect*, and not the *Cauſe* of Death; for the Author of Death may be any Colour. But then, I ſcarce know what to make of this Colour, unleſs it ſhould comprehend in it what is the Cauſe of Greenneſs in Graſs, *i. e.* Sap; ſo that this *Horſe* is ſprightly, and full of *youthful Sap*, which is an Evidence he was to laſt long; and it muſt ſignify ſome young and freſh Power, full of Miſchief.

II. The Rider; *And his Name that ſat upon him was Death.* We do not ſtick at the Cauſe or Reaſon of this Deſignation, whether from the Power he had received, or from what he was to do; it is plain from both he deſerved the Character, and he has this Name to diſtinguiſh him from the other two Riders; and tells us, he was to be more *bloody* than *both*. I do think they are out of it, that would underſtand hereby the *Peſtilence*; for, tho' that be a very terrible Death, yet it kills but one Way, but this Rider has four Ways of Execution, the *Sword, Famine, Peſtilence, and wild Beaſts*: So that this muſt be ſome Meſſenger will be the Occaſion of all theſe, as we ſhall hear afterwards.

III. His Attendant, *And Hell followed with him*, not at a Diſtance, but as it were at his Stirrup, at leaſt hard behind. There are a Variety of Conceits about the Senſe of this: Some, by *Hell*, underſtand the Place of Torment reſerved for the Damned; And ſo they make the Senſe of it to be, That, as faſt as this Rider ſlew, the infernal Pit received their Souls: But this Opinion ſeems to be hard, unleſs it were better grounded. Others underſtand it of *Hell* following this *Rider* and his *Horſe*, to ſwallow them: Let them ride as faſt as they will, they will find themſelves not far from Hell; according to what the *Pſalmiſt* ſays, *Pſal.* lv. 15. *Let Death ſeize upon them, and let them go quick down to Hell; for Wickedneſs is in their Dwellings, and amongſt them.* But the following Clauſe will not allow this to be the Meaning; for it is ſaid, Power was given to *them*, i. e. to both *Death* and *Hell*; they ſeem then to be joined in Commiſſion. Others again, by *Hell*, underſtand the Grave; and we have it neceſſarily ſo taken by the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* xv. 55. *O Grave, where is thy Victory?* It is the ſame Word as here: This appears more reaſonable, becauſe the Whole of theſe Plagues are temporal; and ſo the Meaning is, Wherever this Rider went, they might juſtly call the Place *Aceldama* and *Golgotha*, ſuch Havock would he make, without Pity or Relenting.

IV. The Extent of his Power; the Word ſignifies Authority: It is the ſame Word our Lord had to *Pilate*, when he told him, *Thou couldſt have no Power, except it were given thee from above.* It would appear, whoever is repreſented by this Type, was to be, tho' cruel and bloody, yet a well-modeled Government, and conſequently that was to laſt ſome Time on the Earth: But we would view the Extent of this Authority, both as to its Bounds, and as to his Exerciſe, and laſtly, as to his Inſtruments.

1. The Extent of his Authority is bounded *to a fourth Part of the Earth.* Some ſay, He was to kill the *fourth Part* of Mankind, but the Text ſays not ſo; for, if we read it exactly to the Original, the Meaning is cloſly this, *Authority was given to them to kill upon the fourth Part of the Earth*; ſo that a Quarter of the Earth was to be the Stage or Theatre of this Execution. It is ſaid by ſome, That there were then but three Parts of the Earth known: This would ſay ſomething againſt a Man; But, will any ſay, *America* was not known to the *Spirit of God* at that Time? *Known to God are all his Works, from the Beginning.* Had this other Part of the Earth been ſooner diſcovered, I doubt not but the Meaning of this Emblem had been more eaſy.

2. Their Power was to *kill*; not only to uſe all Manner of Barbarities, but to purſue Men to Death. I ſee not how in any tolerable Senſe this can be underſtood of the Death of Chriſtianity, as if that ſhould in a Manner be extinct, while this Rider and his Fellow were acting in Concert together; or, that all this Slaughter ſhould be made upon the poor Chriſtians: I doubt not but their Share would be in it. Here we ſee the Miſchief is confined to a fourth Part of the World.

3. Their Inſtruments, which are here mentioned four, *The Sword, Hunger, Death, and Beaſts of the Earth.* Theſe four are commonly uſed to expreſs all the temporal Plagues God inflicts upon Tranſgreſſors, *Ezek.* xiv. 21. *When I ſend my four Judgments upon* Jeruſalem, *the Sword, and the Famine, and the noiſom Beaſt, and the Peſtilence.* Again we have the ſame threatned, *Ezek.* v. 17. *So will I ſend you Famine, and evil Beaſts, —— and Peſtilence, and Blood ſhall paſs through thee.* The Sword alludes to War, and all the Miſeries that attend it: The Famine points at all the diſmal Effects of Scarcity and Want. Death is certainly here to be diſtinguiſhed from the

Rider, and moſt reaſonably it is conjectured to be meant of the Peſt, as the Prophet ſays, *Jer.* ix. 21. *Death is come up into our Windows, and entred into our Palaces, to cut off the Children from without, and the young Men from the Streets.* It is commonly called the *Mortality*, becauſe it brings Death ſuddenly to great Numbers. Laſtly, The Beaſts of the Earth, or, as it may be rendred, *Wild Beaſts*; this alſo was threatned as a very terrible Judgment, *I alſo will ſend wild Beaſts among you, which ſhall rob you of your Children, and deſtroy your Cattle, and make you few in Number.* We may remember how the fiery Serpents bit the *Iſraelites.*

Some apply all this to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt pouring out his Wrath upon upſitten and backſliden Profeſſors; and think they have Ground to do ſo, becauſe he ſays of himſelf, *Rev.* i. 18. *I have the Keys of Hell and of Death.* But, beſides what I offered from the other Emblems, which may alſo have Place here, to perſwade us Chriſt was *Rider* only upon the *firſt Horſe*, I further have to offer with Reſpect to this, Chriſt is never called Death; tho' he ſays, He was *dead*, yet he adds, *I am alive.* Again, where can we find any Text in Scripture, wherein Chriſt was confin'd in the Execution of his juſt Wrath to the fourth Part of the Earth? We know *his Dominion is over all.*

I ſhall now ſay ſomething of the Truth of this Emblem, and endeavour to apply the ſeveral Parts thereof. I am ready to believe, this Emblem reſpects the Riſe and Increaſe of the *Mahometan* Deluſion: My Reaſons for it are, If the third Seal was rightly applied to the *Papacy*, it would ſeem reaſonable this that follows it, ſhould reſpect *Mahomet*, becauſe they roſe about a Time, and are equally Enemies to the Church and Cauſe of Chriſt; and it is hard to ſay which of them have made the greateſt Havock of the Church, the one in the Weſt, and the other in the Eaſt. Again, that Deluſion has prevailed as much as Popery itſelf; and is this Day, as it has been for many Centuries, poſſeſt of that Spot of the Earth where the Salvation of Mankind was accompliſhed, where the Chriſtian Religion took firſt Footing, and from thence was diffuſed through the World: And, can we think, our Lord, when he was imparting to *John* all the notable Enemies of his People, would neglect them? ſure, none can allow themſelves to believe it. Yea, Expoſitors that have given the *Pope* a larger Share in this Prophecy than is his Due, are perplexed afterwards how to find this *falſe Prophet*; nor do I ſee any Portion thereof more plainly applicable this Way, than the Emblem of this *fourth Seal*, which I ſhall endeavour to inſtruct in a few Particulars.

1. We begin with the *Horſe*. If we allow his *Colour* to be *green*, then it is eaſily applicable to *Mahomet*, becauſe it was a very robuſt and forward Empire at the Beginning, and in a few Years made greater Progreſs than the *Empire of Rome* did in ſome Ages. I know not if we may add, that *Green* is the beloved Colour amongſt all *Mahometans*. If the Colour of this Horſe be *ſpeckled*, as a great many contend it is, and if we allow it to be pale, that ſays it is mixed; Paleneſs has White and Black daſht thorow other. It repreſents the *Alcoran*, which is a *Hotch-potch* made up of *Gentiliſm*, *Judaiſm*, and ſome Scrapes of *Chriſtianity*: It may alſo be an Emblem of the People, who from the Beginning were a mixed Multitude, all Nations daily incorporating with them, and do mix with them to this Day.

2. Come we to the *Rider*, which is *Death*; if we take it as in the Explication, there was never a Multitude of Men upon the Face of the Earth have ſhed ſo much Blood as they have done; or, if we pleaſe to vary a little from that (which may do as well) all their Atchievements are in the Name of a *dead Prophet*, he is ſtill foremoſt in all they do; therefore that *Horſe* may be ſaid to have *Death ſitting on him.*

3. The Companion of Death is the *Grave*; and it will be found true to a Point what was ſaid in the Explication. But it would be a little nearer, to underſtand by it the Grave of *Mahomet*, which the *Mahometans* have as much in Eſteem, as ever the Papiſts had the *Holy Chapel*; for thither all their *Muſſelmans* are to travel once a Year, or pay well for their Eaſe; and every Year they new mount with fine Hangings his Moſch, and ſell Pieces of the old as moſt valuable Relicks, which they carry about them, aſcribing their Safety and Succeſs thereto.

4. This *Rider* has Power or Authority. Theſe who give themſelves the Satisfaction to inſpect their Hiſtories, will find their Maxims of Government rationally ſuited to the Nature thereof; ſo that nothing could be deviſed more for its Subſiſtence, than they are. That they are often ſhaken with inteſtine Seditions and Concuſſions, which is a Piece of Unhappineſs that all arbitrary Governments are obnoxious to, eſpecially when ſo bulky as that has all along been.

5. If we conſider the Extent of that Deluſion, it is literally true what is ſaid in the Text, no leſs than a *fourth Part of the habitable Earth* is till this Day bewitched with

theſe

these false Principles, and have been so for some Ages. It is owned by all, they are Masters of the best Spots in the World, tho' not cultivate as they might be.

6. As to these *Means* mentioned in the Close of the Verse: They are exactly the Methods taken by the *Mahometans* to aggrandize themselves, and extirpate, at least out of that Part of the World, the *Faith of Christ*. We shall but touch at them. 1. The *Sword*. How much Use they have made of it, is sufficiently known by all in the least seen in their History; for that false Religion was founded in Blood, propagate and continued with using the same Methods. 2. *Hunger*. It is one of their great Plots to starve all their Neighbours, which they did by their continual Inroads, especially upon the Christians that lived next them; and these of them who, under Treaty, lived under their Protection, were so managed, that to subsist in a very mean Manner, would exhaust their Substance in a very short Time; and so were brought to that miserable *Dilemma*, either to *renounce the Lord that bought them*, or go empty to other Places: Tho', for some Years backward, they used poor *Christians* more gently; which, as a late Traveller observes, is more out of Fear (their Power being on the declining Hand) than Love, or better Information. 3. *Death*, or the *Pest*. It is noted by credible Historians, that many a Time the *Pestilence* has been brought into Countries under their Power, but not of their Religion, by the Penury they occasioned. The Plague is the common Issue of a continued Scarcity, in which many a Time People are obliged to feed upon Things, in themselves very unwholesom. 4. *Beasts of the Earth*. If this is to be understood properly, it is a great Truth, as a Country is depopulate, these ravenous Creatures encrease, and are very destructive to the few remaining Inhabitants. But the Barbarities of all Sorts of *Mahometans*, to these they have in Slavery, and differ from them in Principle, is but too well proven, from the many miserable Spectacles we have seen come from thence; and may tell us what Sort of Beasts are meant here.

SEAL V.

9 And when he had opened the fifth Seal, I saw under the Altar the Souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the Testimony which they held.

10 And they cried with a loud Voice, saying, How long, O Lord, Holy and True, dost thou not judge and avenge our Blood on them that dwell on the Earth?

11 And white Robes were given unto every one of them, and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little Season, until their Fellow-servants also, and their Brethren that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled.

THIS *Seal*, when opened, has a considerable Difference from the other four, which hath amused the Learned: But we had better lightly touch, and go on, than struggle with uncertain Curiosities. There are two Differences here, one in the *Introduction*, another in the *Vision*. 1. Upon the Back of the *Lamb's opening a Seal before*, some of the *Living Creatures called*: Here, nothing is interjected betwixt the *Opening* and the *Vision*. I pass all other Reasons, for the Sake of this one, The Vision itself supplied the Want of a *Voice*: All the rest are but Conjectures; and indeed the Voice of the Vision was the first Thing he heard after the *Seal was opened*. There is no Emblem here: The Reason given for this is also plain, This Vision did not concern the *Earth*, all was transacted in *Heaven*; and the Report of it by the Apostle, would be Comfort enough to the Church.

In general, this contains an earnest Address offered by these *Souls* in *Heaven*, who *glorified God* with the last Drop of their *Blood*; with the Divine Answer thereto. Tho' I am not for the Doctrine of these Gentlemen who plead for Periods, yet, when I consider the Contents of this Vision, it does not appear to be so *general* and *universal* as to its Application, as some would give out: And the Reasons of it I fetch from the Parts of the Vision, in these Particulars, 1. This represents the Address as made a long Time after the *Persecution* had exercised the Church, *i. e.* Not only after the Rise of *Popery* and *Mahometanism*, but even after they had come to some considerable Height, and spent much of their *Spight* upon the Church. And further, at such a Time, when they had little

Hope of the Downfal of their Enemies, further than was contained in the Promiſes and Threatnings: From this, one might think it points at that Period wherein the Enemies were moſt rampant. 2. It ſeems to point at that Time when theſe Enemies had not much longer to reign and rage. This ſeems plain from the Anſwer of God, *v.* 11. for he bids *reſt for a little Seaſon*: *Some Time*, or a *little Time*, may be long in itſelf, while it is ſaid to be *ſhort* in God's Account; But here we have a ſhorter Meaſure, by comparing the *How long* in their Supplication, and the *little Seaſon* in God's Anſwer, which ſays plainly there was more of it paſt than to come. But we can come no nearer; and ſhall proceed to conſider the Parts of the Viſion, which are three, 1. The Supplicants. 2. The Supplication. 3. The Anſwer.

I. There is to be conſidered the Character of the Supplicants, *v.* 9. in theſe two, 1. Their Quality. 2. The Place where they were.

1. Their Quality, which diſtinguiſhes them from *Angels*, from all the Reprobate, yea, and from other Believers; for they are deſigned the *Souls of Martyrs*: Where I ſhall notice theſe few Things in the given Account.

(1.) They are *Souls*, which we are to take, in a proper Senſe, for the rational Part of the Believer in a ſeparate State. It cannot be underſtood of the *Blood*, which is ſometimes called the Life, and juſtly; but never the Soul, which is a ſpiritual Subſtance. Nor need we trouble ourſelves about a great many curious Queſtions this might give Riſe to; as, How *John* could ſee them, being inviſible? or, If there were Emblems of them, what were they? for this is to be *wiſe above what is written*. *John* was in the *Spirit*; how far that unknown Caſe he was in, might help him to know Souls, we cannot tell; only it is very certain, *Spirits* know one another, tho' not *ſenſibly*, as we do on Earth.

(2.) They are the Souls of theſe *were ſlain*; or, as ſome render it, were *ſacrificed*, i. e who died a violent Death: So that their Bodies were on Earth, but the Souls tranſlated to Heaven; which proves that Souls ſubſiſt in a *ſeparate State*, and that, immediately after the Separation, they are carried to Heaven that belong to God.

(3.) The Grounds of their Sufferings, which are two, 1. *For the Word of God*, whereby ſome underſtand the Truths of God; which, while they ſealed them with their Blood, was the beſt Evidence they believed them. Others ſay, The perſonal Word of God, Jeſus Chriſt: But, ſeeing our Lord has united them, we have no Occaſion to ſeparate them, *Mark* viii. 35. *Whoſoever ſhall loſe his Life for my Sake and the Goſpel's*. 2. *For the Teſtimony which they held*, i. e. the open Profeſſion of Chriſt, and a correſponding Practice: There is a Step further, which ſome add here, *viz.* to defend and maintain the ſame againſt Gainſayers and Oppoſers. We may allow theſe all to be joined together.

2. The Place where they were, *Under the Altar*. We did not hear of an Altar before, nor is there any *material Altar* in Heaven; at moſt there was an Emblem of one, ſeeing only Souls are ſaid to be under it. There was preſent at that Viſion, the true Altar, Jeſus Chriſt, or that Altar which ſanctified the Offering Chriſt made of himſelf, which is the Divine Nature; and ſo the Apoſtle ſays, *Heb.* ix. 14. *He, through the eternal Spirit, offered up himſelf a Sacrifice without Spot unto God*. The plain Senſe of it then is, He ſaw them under the Shadow of the Almighty, here they were ſafe. It is then in vain for Expoſitors to perplex themſelves, whether it was the *Altar of Incenſe*, or the *Altar of Burnt-offerings*, ſeeing Chriſt is the Truth of both.

II. The Supplication, *v.* 10. where it is ſaid, *They cried with a loud Voice*. Some think it an improper Speech, and that it was their Blood that cried; as the Lord ſaid to *Cain*, *Thy Brother's Blood calleth to me from the Ground*. To be ſure, God hears theſe Cries always, and needed not the Solemnity of opening a Seal. Beſides, tho' God ſhould underſtand the Voice of ſuch a Cry, it was not poſſible for *John* to know it; we are therefore to believe that there really was ſuch a Call, and a great one, as the Text ſays; for, why might not ſeparate Souls emit a Voice, as well as Angels, which we find very ordinary in the Scripture? But we have further here, the Matter of this Prayer, in Form of an Expoſtulation; where we have, 1. Againſt whom they pray. 2. What they ſeek againſt them. 3. The Motives.

1. They pray againſt *them that dwell on the Earth*. It would ſeem theſe who had ſhed their Blood were not on the Earth, or they did not know it; but their Seed was there, and ſuch as were treating the ſurviving Saints, as thoſe had been, while on Earth. And this Expoſtulation may be particularly directed againſt theſe three Horſes, and their Riders, we had before; the Character they give of them, is much the ſame with what the Pſalmiſt gives, *Pſal.* xvii. 14. *Men in the World, which have their Portion in this Life*.

(2.) What they ſeek againſt them, to *judge and avenge our Blood*. They ſeek vindictive Juſtice, which is either temporal or eternal; the temporal Plague will be, when God

God bringeth down *Babylon*, and they require they actual Execution of a juſt Sentence againſt them; it has an Eye alſo to the *laſt* and *general Judgment*, when all particular Judgments will be publiſhed and confirmed. This they propoſe by Way of *Expoſtulation*, not as if they were fretful or impatient, but to expreſs the Fervour of their Deſires, and becauſe God's Patience had been long exerciſed: And, further, they were Judgment-ripe; all which are Motives in the very Prayer.

3. They puſh this Deſire with other Motives, one from the *Sovereignty of God*, where they diſclaim all Vengeance, and leave that to God; another taken from his *Holineſs*, and a third from his *Faithfulneſs*.

III. There is the Return of this Supplication, *v.* 11. In this they get more than than their Supplication ſeem'd to import; at leaſt, God underſtood it otherwiſe than any other could have done; and therefore he anſwers, 1. By beſtowing an Equivalent to, and much above the Loſs they had ſuſtained. 2. By a merciful Promiſe in the Terms of their Deſire.

1. God, in Anſwer to their Prayers, makes them a ſufficient Compenſation for all the Loſs they had met with; for *white Robes are given to every one of them*: We had the Import of White before, *Chap.* iii. 4. but there is an Addition of a Word here, we had not before, *Robe*, στολαι; which, we are told, was a long Garment, and the Habit of theſe in Wedlock of Perſons of Diſtinction, to ſhew that they were received into a Marriage-Covenant with Chriſt, and that he would take Care of them; and, wherever he was, they ſhould be: In ſhort, this was a Pledge of all the Bliſs and Satisfaction Heaven could give, or they receive. There ſtarts up a Difficulty here; Either theſe Souls were but newly arrived in Heaven, or, if they had been there for any Time, how come they to want this *Robe* ſo long? There are a great many needleſs Returns made to this, not worth the While to name, they having ſo little to ſupport them. I own, I could go in with theſe, who ſay, They were juſt at that Time got to Heaven; but then, it looks ſo little like a Saint, to fall a complaining as ſoon as they enter the Threſhold of Glory, this does not look ſo well: And therefore, I rather incline to think, God did clothe theſe Souls after the ſame glorious Manner they will appear at the Reſurrection, for the Satisfaction of the Apoſtle, and the Comfort of all militant Believers, that they might know for what they ſuffer.

2. God gives them a merciful Anſwer, in a direct Return to what they asked; wherein God, not only promiſes to avenge them, but tells them when: The Anſwer is delivered in the ſofteſt Terms, that breathes forth great Affection; we may view them a little in Parcels, 1. He promiſes them a perfect State of Reſt or Satisfaction: There ſeems to be more in the Word, than our Tranſlators have hit; for, whereas it is rendred, *That they ſhould reſt*, they ſhould have turned it αναπαυω, *Should reſt again*; for ſo the Prepoſition ανα imports, and is the ſame with the *Latine Re* in Compoſition. And ſo the Meaning is, *q. d.* You have enjoyed perfect Reſt and Pleaſure hitherto, be content with the ſame for a little Time longer, and then all your Fellows in Affliction will be gathered to you. I underſtand the ſame Thing by *Reſt*, as was expreſt in *White*. 2. Another Ground of Comfort is, from the Shortneſs of the Time, *for a little Seaſon*; to ſhew the Time of their Expectation was not only ſhorter than formerly it was, becauſe God had fixed the Time, but becauſe the Time of Perſecution to come was ſhort, in Compariſon of what was paſt. 3. He gives the Limitation of the Time, *Until their Fellow-ſervants and Brethren ſhould be killed*, &c. I am very eaſy how they explain *Brethren* and *Fellow-ſervants*, whether by the firſt, be meant *Miniſters* or Kindred; and by the ſecond, private *Chriſtians*, or the Members of other Churches: I am ſure they are all Saints; And the Comprehenſion of the Words belongs more to Application than Explication. But here he advertiſes them of ſeveral Things; As, 1. They were not the only Witneſſes Chriſt had on the Earth; for others were raiſed up in their Room, and would be faithful to the Death, as they had been. 2. God had determined the Number of theſe he would honour to give Witneſs for him; and the Rage of the Enemy ſhould reach no further than that Number. 3. Theſe were to ſuffer as painful and ignominious Deaths, as they had done; for it is ſaid, Till they *were killed, as they were*.

I ſhall be at no Pains to purge this Portion of Scripture from ſome *Popiſh Doctrines*, as Prayers to Saints, and their Interceſſion for us; for there is not one Word of a Prayer offered to theſe Saints, and as little are they concerned about theſe on Earth. Another Principle they have, to bury under the Altar: Theſe who maintain any Altar upon Earth after Chriſt's Aſcenſion, may look to themſelves; but however, this *Altar* was in Heaven, and none are buried there.

The Application of this Seal is what many ſweat about. But ſeeing I told the whole of the Viſion was in Heaven, and concerned ſolely the Inhabitants of the upper Houſe;

and that the Comfort flowing therefrom, equally concerns all the Ages of the Church, till the Deſtruction of *Babylon*; it is in vain to dream of a Receſs or Ceſſation from Perſecution, when this ſhould be accompliſhed: For, by all, we are only informed of the glorious Condition the *Martyrs* of Chriſt are admitted to; and to tell them the Funeral-piles that conſume their Bodies, are like the Prophet's *fiery Chariot*, to waft their Souls to *Immanuel's Land*.

It does not ſeem fair either to place any Perſecution under this Seal; for all that is mentioned of it here, is by Way of Prophecy, which ſays, It was to fall out ſometime thereafter. It is not to be doubted, but theſe three Enemies, mentioned in the ſecond, third, and fourth Seals, were at this Time going on with their Enmity againſt the *Seed of the Woman*, and would never ſtop, till God put it out of their Power. But, whether this Slaughter happened under the ſixth Seal, or if that Seal begins the *Plagues* of God upon the Enemies of his Church, revenging the Blood of his dear Saints, will be our next Enquiry, and, conſidering the Diverſity of Opinions, will be no eaſy Work.

SEAL VI.

THIS *Seal* is very obſervable in all its Steps, yet none of them ſo much perplexed with various Gloſſes. It ſeems indiſputable that it reaches to the Cloſe of Chapter vii. Nor is it juſt to ſay the 7th Chapter is introductory to the ſeventh Seal: For none of the *Seals* have any other Preface, but the *Lamb's opening them*, and the Voice of the *four Living Creatures* at the *firſt four*: And to make it a Pendicle of the *ſixth Seal*, is the ſame Thing as to ſay it belongs to it. There will be no ſmall Difficulty to fight our Way through the Oppoſitions made to the Senſe of this Seal: One is from the Obſcurity of the *Prophet's Stile*, which we wave till we come to the Conſideration of the Words. Another, and perhaps more formidable, is a prevailing Opinion, that this *Seal* repreſents the *Day of Judgment*: And the ſecond Part of it, in the next Chapter, gives a View of the *bleſſed State* of the Saints above. If we allow this, I ſee not how we can make Senſe of the following Part of the Prophecy, unleſs we ſhould follow that unhappy Method, uſed by ſome, of ſhaping the whole Frame of it to our own Model; whereby indeed we may get a Shred of it in one Place, which tackt to another, may make a very ſtrange Scheme, and hang pretty well together. But I would enquire, How is it poſſible to prove that to be the Mind of the *Spirit of God*? I am ſure none ſhould believe them. And I may venture to ſay, The one Half of Difficulties, which obſtruct ingenuous Expoſitors, is owing to this confident Way of mangling, and ſoldering again the ſeveral Parts of this Prophecy, together with their looſe and careleſs Handling of the Text.

I ſhall therefore endeavour to clear this in general about it, that it does not concern the laſt and general Judgment; tho', I own, there are Expreſſions in it that might be applicable thereto, and reaſonably: For as our Lord did deliver his Prophecy concerning the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and the *Jewiſh* Nation, in ſuch Terms, as alſo pointed at the Day of Judgment, becauſe of the Affinity betwixt them; but yet there is no Identity, yea, not ſo much as a perfect Likeneſs, only a very beautiful Analogy. The Method I propoſe to effectuate this is, 1. From the Strain and Context of this Prophecy, to ſhew it cannot belong to the laſt Judgment. 2. To ſhew, from other Prophets, that the ſame Expreſſions here uſed, have been adduced by them for other Purpoſes. Yet I ſhall not refuſe, but the *Spirit of God* might direct to this, to enforce the Faith and Conſideration of *Doomſday*, from theſe leſſer Strokes of his Juſtice which are Emblems thereof; And to aſſure us, the ſame Motives of Holineſs and Juſtice in God, and Sin in the Creature, are procuring of both.

I. We are to offer ſome Conſiderations from the Context, proving this *Seal* does not reſpect the laſt and *general Judgment*.

1. It were not reaſonable to expect the Accompliſhment of the *ſeventh Seal* ſhould be after the Day of Judgment, which however muſt happen, on Suppoſition that the *ſixth* doth repreſent the Day of Judgment. Nor will the Reply offered by a late learned Author carry it off, That the Events of theſe Seals do not ſucceed one another in the Order of Time, without giving one Word of Reaſon to confirm it: For, if the Order of Succeſſion of the Events anſwer not to the Order of the Emblems, we will be at a great Loſs where to find it. And beſides, it would ſay the Spirit of God had rather a Deſign of *amuſing* than *inſtructing*, ſhould we ſuppoſe ſomething firſt revealed to be laſt accompliſhed.

2. If

2. If this Seal is to be underſtood of the Day of Judgment, it will follow, that God is finally to cut off his Enemies without giving them a Warning; which I challenge any Man to give an Inſtance of from Scripture: For always, before ever he applied deſtructive Judgments, there were Warnings, yea, and leſs Strokes went before, to render them the more inexcuſable; But here, upon the ſimple Application of the Souls under the Altar, he lets fly his utmoſt Wrath againſt them.

3. We are ſure the *ſeven Trumpets* and the *ſeven Vials* are before the Deſtruction of *Antichriſt*, and ſo *much* longer before the Day of Judgment. As for the *ſeven Trumpets*, they plainly conſtitute the ſeventh Seal, as will be evident to any ſhall read two Verſes of the eighth Chapter; ſo that of Neceſſity they muſt bring in all theſe betwixt the *fifth Seal* and the *ſixth*. It is plain to a Demonſtration, that the fifth Seal is before the Day of Judgment; and it is as plain that *Seal* followed the other four, elſe the Saints ſhould complain before they were leſed. There was nothing to injure them before the *ſecond Seal*, and they had no other Enemy to fear after the *fourth*; and conſequently all the Miſery they underwent was repreſented under the Emblems of theſe *three Seals*.

4. In the fourteenth Chapter we have the Illuſtration of the *ſecond Part of this Seal*: After which we find the everlaſting Goſpel preached, and many heavy Woes denounced againſt *Antichriſt*, yea, and the ſeven Vials poured out upon him; and all this long before the Day of Judgment: Elſe they muſt be at the greateſt Pains to diſlocate the whole Frame of this Prophecy, and put it out of that Order the *God of Order* has put it in; which is too bold and daring a Stroke.

5. After all, there is not ſo much as mention of the *Day of Judgment* in all this *Seal*: For, after all theſe terrible Things in the Viſion, we find them more afraid than hurt. They call, 'tis true, to the Mountains to fall upon them; but not one Word of a *Judge* or *Books*, and the other *Solemnities*, Scripture aſſures us, will accompany the laſt and general Judgment; A pointed Account whereof we have, *Chap.* xx. 11, &c.

6. All the Reaſon I find the learned *Marck* gives, is taken from the Force of the Expreſſions in the Text, which he alledges impoſſible to apply to any other Thing than the Day of Judgment; and collates them with ſeveral other Scriptures which treat of the laſt Judgment: Yet 'tis plain, ſome of them immediately reſpected the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*. But I ſhall endeavour to ſhew the Weakneſs of this Foundation, by proving,

II. The ſame Expreſſions are uſed by other Prophets, and neceſſarily applicable to other Purpoſes; yea, actually applied by themſelves to leſſer Judgments: Which, that the Evidence may be the clearer, I ſhall quote

1*ſt Paſſage* is God's Threatning againſt the great Kingdom of *Babylon*, which was long a dead Weight upon the *Jewiſh* Church. With Alluſion to which, the Enemies of Chriſt's Kingdom bear that Name to this Day, tho' there was never any Kingdom ſince Chriſt which had that City, or any other City of that Name for its Head. *Iſa.* xiii. 9, 10. *The Day of the Lord cometh:----- The Stars of Heaven, and the Conſtellations thereof ſhall not give their Light: The Sun ſhall be darkned in his going forth, and the Moon ſhall not cauſe her Light to ſhine.* v. 13. *I will ſhake the Heaven, and the Earth ſhall remove out of her Place.* This is plainly a Threatning againſt the *Chaldeans*, and was to be accompliſhed by the *Medes*; And the Prophet explains it himſelf, *v.* 17, 19. *Behold, I will ſtir up the* Medes *againſt them.* Expoſitors think it alludes to a terrible Storm at Sea, in which the poor Mariners ſee no Sun, or Moon, or Stars, but all the Creation ſeems to them in a Convulſion, and themſelves ready every Moment to be ſwallowed up; which alſo in a little Time follows.

2*d Paſſage* is a Threatning againſt the Kingdom of *Judah*, Jer. iv. 23. 24. *I beheld the Earth, and lo, it was without Form and void: And the Heavens, and they had no Light. I beheld the Mountains, and lo, they trembled, and all the Hills moved lightly. And lo, there was no Man, and all the Birds of Heaven were fled.* This Viſion the Prophet had concerning that ſinful Nation, who would not be brought to Repentance. The Inſtrument God uſed in all this, is mentioned before, *v.* 7. *The Lion is come up from his Thicket*, &c. by whom Expoſitors mean the *King of Babylon*: And all theſe Expreſſions are of temporal Judgments, and no Word of the great Day of Accounts.

3*d Paſſage* is a Threatning againſt *Egypt*, when that Kingdom was in her Prime, *Ezek.* xxxii. 7, 8. *I will cover the Heavens, and make the Stars thereof dark: I will cover the Sun with a Cloud, and the Moon ſhall not give her Light. And all the bright Stars of Heaven will I make dark over thee, and ſet Darkneſs upon thy Land.* The Meaning of all this we have afterwards, *v.* 11. *The Sword of the King of* Babylon *ſhall come upon thee.*

4*th* is a Warning to Repentance, with Certification, if they did not, he would viſit them in Wrath, *Joel* ii. 2. *A Day of Darkneſs and Gloomineſs, a Day of Clouds and of thick Darkneſs.* v. 10. *The Earth ſhall quake, and the Heavens ſhall tremble, the Sun and the Moon ſhall be dark, and the Stars ſhall withdraw from ſhining.* The Inſtruments of all this are *Caterpillers* and *Locuſts*, Joel i. 4. or the *Chaldeans* repreſented by them: However, it was to be a very heavy Judgment, as we read afterwards, *Joel* ii. 30, 31. *I will ſhew Wonders in the Heavens, and the Earth, Blood and Fire, and Pillars of Smoke. The Sun ſhall be turned into Darkneſs, and the Moon into Blood, before the great and terrible Day of the Lord come.* Which is advanced here as Harbinger of the Goſpel, in the Mind of the beſt Expoſitors. This has but a far-off Relation to the Day of Judgment, tho' it may comprehend the Diſſolution of the *Jewiſh* Common-wealth.

5*th* is a Paſſage upon a quite other Occaſion, encouraging the People to proceed in building of the Temple, *I will ſhake the Heavens and the Earth*: Which we have immediately in plain Terms, *I will overthrow the Thrones of Kingdoms, and I will deſtroy the Strength of the Kingdoms of the Heathen.*

6*th* is our Lord's Propheey of the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, Matth. xxiv. 29. *Immediately after the Tribulation of thoſe Days ſhall the Sun be darkned, and the Moon ſhall not give her Light, and the Stars ſhall fall from Heaven, and the Powers of the Heavens ſhall be ſhaken.* I own this is a Paſſage ſome refer allenarly to the Day of Judgment, and therefore will think it proves nothing: All I ſay in Anſwer is, to read the ſecond Verſe of the Chapter quoted, and it will not be poſſible but conclude that the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* is the firſt and immediate Meaning of the Text.

Having eſtabliſhed this firſt Point, it follows plainly we are to leave the literal Meaning, and take the whole of this Seal prophetically, as to its Senſe. And, in handling of it, we have two Parts that it naturally falls into: The 1*ſt*, This Chapter is directed againſt the Enemies of the Church; I muſt take this for granted at the Time, and ſhall endeavour to prove it afterwards. The ſecond is in favours of the *Church* and People of God, which we have at great Length in the following Chapter. What I advance on the firſt Part will need to be but ſhort, after what is evicted; nor will we need to dwell on every Clauſe, nor yet to diſprove all the various Thoughts that croſs this general Poſition we have laid down, and I think proven.

12 And I beheld when he had opened the ſixth Seal, and lo, there was a great Earthquake, and the Sun became black as Sackcloth of Hair, and the Moon became as Blood.

13 And the Stars of Heaven fell unto the Earth, even as a Fig-tree caſteth her untimely Figs when ſhe is ſhaken of a mighty Wind.

14 And the Heaven departed as a Scroll when it is rolled together, and every Mountain and Iſland were removed out of their Place.

15 And the Kings of the Earth, and the great Men, and the rich Men, and the chief Captains, and the mighty Men, and every Bondman, and every Free-man, hid themſelves in the Dens, and in the Rocks of the Mountains,

16 And ſaid to the Mountains and Rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the Face of him that ſitteth on the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb.

17 For the great Day of his Wrath is come, and who ſhall be able to ſtand?

This *Seal* is in the ſame Form with the foregoing, without any of the *Living Creatures* calling, or any *Horſe* with a *Rider*: The Reaſon of the *firſt* may be, becauſe the Viſion is Voice enough of itſelf, and able to command Attention from all the World. Of the *ſecond* we may give this Reaſon, Becauſe there was no new Emblem brought upon the Stage: Only the *firſt Horſe* with his *Rider* anſwering the Deſign of his *Crown*, as well as the *Prayers of the Souls under the Altar*, with a Witneſs conquers.

In this Viſion we have two very notable Parts, 1. Some moſt alarming and unexpected Emergents, *v.* 12, 13, 14. 2. Some confounding Effects thereof, upon the greateſt Men on the Face of the Earth.

I. There

I. There are ſome very *notable Emergents* deſcribed in this *Seal*, or a wonderful Revolution of Affairs amongſt the Enemies of God's People, in the firſt three Verſes; to which I premiſe, It is not to be expected we can meet with every Piece of the Truth of all theſe Emblems: It will be enough we conſider the *Spirit of God* repreſenting the *Perſons* againſt whom he is to plead under this *Seal*, as a *World*; which we find a Deſignation given often to the Enemies of the Church, and ſo often, that it would be loſt Labour to prove it. Now, for the common Behoof of the World, there is a Sun, Moon, Stars, *&c.* without which it would be a moſt unpleaſant Habitation: And ſo, by theſe Things, we are to underſtand what, amongſt them, are inſtead of all theſe; and ſo the great Change, ſaid to be on theſe Things, points out that Revolution will befal them. I ſhall but ſhortly glance at the Particulars, which we find to be Six in Number.

1. *Lo, there was a great Earthquake.* That this Word σεισμος is juſtly rendred an *Earthquake*, is plain from a Number of Texts; but that it is alſo otherwiſe tranſlated, is no leſs plain from ſeveral other Portions of Scripture; particularly, it is ſaid, *Mat.* xxi. 10. *When Chriſt was come into* Jeruſalem, *the whole City was in an Uproar.* And indeed this is the proper Signification of the Word, and can never have another, but when ſome other Word is either expreſt or underſtood. Commotion then is to be meant thereby, which is Plague enough, as we ſee from that Threatning, *Iſa.* xxix. 6, 7. *Thou ſhalt be viſited of the Lord of Hoſts with Thunder and Earthquake*; which is rendred in plain Language, *The Multitude of all the Nations ſhall fight againſt* Ariel.

2. *The Sun became black as Sackcloth* Some would have this to ſignify ſome notable *Eclipſe* of that *Luminary*, but it is not poſſible it can hold here; for there cannot be an Eclipſe of both Sun and Moon while they are in one *Horizon* at the ſame Time: So that ſomething elſe is to be underſtood thereby; and that which we find meant thereby is Proſperity: And ſo it is ſaid of theſe in Adverſity, *Jer.* xv. 9. *Her Sun is gone down while it is yet Day.* The plain Senſe of it is, They ſhould proſper no more, but take a retrograde Motion. And therefore I may ſafely conclude, Chriſt is not to be underſtood by the Sun here, eſpecially that we find the Sun of Righteouſneſs ſhining at the ſame Time there is Diſtreſs upon Nations: So it is ſaid by *Joel*, Chap. ii. 28. *I will pour out my Spirit upon all Fleſh*, &c. This is to be underſtood of Chriſt's Power: Yet it is added in a little, *v.* 3. *The Sun ſhall be turned into Darkneſs.*

3. *The Moon became as Blood.* Commonly in the *Prophets*, where Mention is made of the Sun, we have alſo the Moon, becauſe theſe are the two great Luminaries of Heaven: And ſo the Meaning is, The whole of their Satisfaction, both more and leſs, is gone, at leaſt diminiſhed; for, next to the Sun, the Moon is the greateſt Comfort.

4. *The Stars of Heaven ſhall fall unto the Earth*, &c. That, by Stars, we are to mean the Miniſters of the Goſpel, is plain; but then it is only in the Church. But we find this to be a Word otherwiſe applied, when ſpoken of other Nations: So, when the Lord is denouncing Wrath againſt *Egypt*, we find this to be one of their Miſeries, *Ezek.* xxxii. 7. *I will cover the Heavens, and make the Stars thereof dark.* So that we may underſtand Perſons in Eminence, and ſuch as ſhine among the Multitude. This may reſpect God's turning the Wiſdom of the Wiſe into Folly, which is a falling from Heaven to Earth.

5. *The Heavens departed as a Scroll when it is rolled together.* We have the ſame Expreſſion ſpoke of the Enemies of the Church, by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. xxxiv. 4. *The Heavens ſhall be rolled together as a Scroll*; Where it cannot be meant of the Church: But what to make the Senſe of it, is not eaſy, nor indeed material; we may underſtand the curtailing or leſſening their Domains, that their Dominions be made more narrow than formerly; for indeed that is the Heaven wherein *Antichriſt* moveth.

6. *Every Mountain and Iſland were removed out of their Place.* By *Mountains*, in Scripture, we are to underſtand *great Strengths*, that are not eaſily removed, eſpecially great Kings and Princes; ſo *Babylon* is called a *Deſtroying Mountain* Jer. li. 25. Proud Perſons alſo come under this Deſignation, *Iſa.* ii. 14. *The Day of the Lord ſhall come upon all the high Mountains*; which is explained immediately afterwards, *v.* 17. *The Loftineſs of Man ſhall be bowed down, and the Haughtineſs of Man ſhall be made low.* By Iſlands may be meant ſmaller Powers, as ſeems to be the Purport of the Word by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. xli. 1. *Keep Silence before me, O Iſlands.* That this is the Meaning, is plain from the ſame Prophet, *Iſa.* xl. 15. where the *Iſles* are diſtinguiſhed from *Nations*, *The Nations are as the Drop of a Bucket*; --- *he taketh up the Iſles as a very little Thing.* And ſo the Meaning is, Both greater and ſmaller Powers diſappeared, and loſt their former Heart and Appearance.

II. There are ſome confounding Effects of all theſe, in the next three Verſes. It was not poſſible but ſuch great and ſudden Revolutions ſhould have ſtrange Effects, and ſtrike with Conſternation all theſe concerned in them; eſpecially that the Senſe of their

Guilt might add to their Horror: Nay, it is very uſual for Guilt to magnify a Miſery; as we ſee in the Caſe of *Joſeph*'s Brethren, *We were verily guilty concerning our Brother*, ſaid they, when their Apprehenſions exceeded their real Danger: And indeed it is ſo here; where we conſider the Perſons, and their Behaviour.

1. We have the Perſons mentioned, *v.* 15. in ſeveral Claſſes, which I ſhall not be at Pains particularly to conſider, further than, 1. To note, that here all Sorts of Perſons, from the greateſt to the meaneſt, are comprehended; none are excluded that are included in the *ſecond, third and fourth Seals*. 2. We are here not to underſtand the Empire of *Rome*, as a great many incline to think, becauſe here are mentioned a Plurality of Kings; and, by the Deſignation they get, *Kings of the Earth*, we may ſafely underſtand all Kings, at leaſt ſuch as had been either Art or Part in the Miſeries of Chriſt's Flock.

2. Their Conſternation is declared to us, in two notable Diſcoveries, *of their Words*, and *of their Deeds*, and *the Reaſon of both*.

(1.) What they did, *v.* 15. *They hid themſelves in the Rocks, and Dens of the Mountains*. This is an ordinary Effect of Fear; and, the greater the Apprehenſion is, the more cautious People are to ſecure themſelves: We have an Expreſſion to the ſame Purpoſe by the Prophet, of the Enemies of the Lord's People, *Iſa.* ii. 19. *They ſhall go into the Holes of the Rocks, and into the Caves of the Earth, for Fear of the Lord, and for the Glory of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the Earth*. Than which I know not a clearer Senſe, for the Prophecy concerns the Advancement of the Kingdom of Chriſt; for he ſays, *Iſa.* ii. 2. *It ſhall come to paſs, in the laſt Days, that the Mountain of the Lord's Houſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed upon the Top of the Mountains*, &c. And it is added, *v.* 4. *He ſhall judge among the Nations, and rebuke many People*. This is, to be ſure, more than a *pannick* Fear, that drives ſuch Sorts of Men with the *Conies* in the Holes of the Rock for Shelter. This we have otherwiſe phraſed by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Chap. xlix. 22. *At that Day ſhall the mighty Men of* Edom *be as the Heart of a Woman in her Pangs*.

2. We have their Words, *v.* 16. *They did ſay to the Rocks and to the Mountains, Fall on us*, &c. We have Expreſſions of this Kind elſewhere, *Hoſ.* x. 8. *They ſhall ſay to the Mountains, Cover us, and to the Hills, fall on us*. This is the Raving of theſe diſtracted Idolaters, when God was to contend with them: The like Deſpair our Lord foretold ſhould be among the *Jews*, when their capital City ſhould be taken, *Luke* xxiii. 30. *Then ſhall they begin to ſay to the Mountains, Fall on us, and to the Hills, Cover us*. God's Enemies are the moſt deſtitute and diſtracted People in the World, they have no Hope and no Help; for God is their Enemy, and who can be their Friend? It is further to be noted, what is the Ground of their Fear, *The Wrath of the Lamb*; ſo, as ſays our Country-man, Mr. *Durham*, "The Sin of oppoſing "the Goſpel, and the Servants of Chriſt, was more bitter to them, than all the other "Pieces of Wickedneſs they were guilty of."

3. The Reaſon of both their Actions and Expreſſions, we have, *v.* 17. *For the great Day of his Wrath is come*. Hence it is that Expoſitors bring their *Achillean* Argument, to prove the Intendment of this Seal to be the laſt Judgment, and *Pareus* is ſo brisk as tell us, *They but grope in the Dark, that would affix any other Meaning thereto*. But, it might be thought, before One ſhould build ſo much upon Authority, they ſhould know the Credibility thereof: Now, I cannot ſay, the Authority of theſe ſeven Sorts of Perſons is ſo much to be depended on, as take the Doctrine of the Day of Judgment from the raving Expreſſions vented by their deſpairing Hearts and Tongues; For this is no otherwiſe the Voice of the *Spirit of God*, than as it truly repreſents the Thoughts of theſe Perſons: And ſo one may be tempted to ſay, They rather *grope in the Dark*, that ſpeak after them, than ſuch as look for better Authority. The horrid Guilt of theſe Perſons impoſed on them, that when they felt the firſt Touch of God's avenging Hand, that they believed it would never ſtop, till it had made a full End of them. More than this, I ſee not how we can make of this Text; and ſo it makes nothing for their Purpoſe who would have this *Seal* an Emblem of *Doomſday*.

There is no Difficulty more to be removed concerning this Seal. Some conceit that this *Seal* contains the Accompliſhment of that *Prophecy* in the *fifth Seal*, of the Slaughter of the reſt of *God's Saints*; and conclude, that this is a heavy and ſad Time to the Church, and not to her Enemies. To this I anſwer, There is no Need of a different *Seal* to compleat the Sufferings of the Saints: My Reaſon is, The *Seals* point more at the Authors, than the Facts; as has been ſeen in the ſecond, third and fourth Seals. And ſeeing there was no new Agent, nor is there any ſo much as inſinuate in the fifth Seal, all that can be underſtood by that Deſire of God to the Saints, *to reſt a little Seaſon*, is, That theſe three Enemies, were yet in their full Carreer in perſecuting the People

People of God, and in a ſhort Time would be done; and, as ſoon as their Permiſſion was out, God's Indignation ſhould begin.

But we would offer a Reaſon or two from the Context, to prove that this *Seal* has no *Vengeance* in it againſt the Church; at leaſt, the great Trouble it brought forth, as to its Interpretation, was to her Enemies. I do not ſay, the Church ſuffered nothing in her Members; but, this I ſay, Whatever private Loſſes there were, the Advantage was publick: And at this began the promiſed Return to the Saints Prayers in the former Seal. To inſtruct this, I offer theſe few Reaſons.

1*ſt* Reaſon is from the Perſons on whom this Plague lighted, *Kings, Great Men, Rich Men, Generals*, &c. Before this Seal, we will find none of theſe Characters belong to Chriſt, all of them had joined Sides with one or other of the three perſecuting Riders: And it was the Effect of this Seal, that any of theſe were for the Lamb.

2*dly*, This is alſo evident from the Terror was upon their Spirits; for, whatever Reverence the Saints have for Chriſt, which no Doubt is very great, yet they have nothing of a ſlaviſh Fear and Terror, for this is the Portion of his Enemies, as we have ſeen before.

3*dly*, The Carriage of theſe Perſons is not like the Behaviour of a ſad and diſtreſſed Church; for the People run away from Chriſt, and ſeek Shelter in Holes and Dens: Whereas the People of God, whenever they are in Affliction, they run the high Way to Chriſt, and exerciſe Patience and Supplication; according to the Command of God, *In the Time of Trouble call upon me*, &c.

4*thly*, Theſe Winds of Trouble were powerfully reſtrained by *four Angels*, that they might not affect the People of God, who, we ſee, were ſealed in the next Chapter; ſo that they did not fall like untimely or green Figs, but were hid in the Hollow of God's Hand, till the Calamity was paſt and over.

5*thly*, It will not be poſſible to reconcile this Notion of the Perſecution of the Church in the firſt Part of this Seal, with their Praiſes in the ſecond; the beſt of Saints, in a Day of Trouble and Anguiſh, *hang their Harps upon the Willows*: And indeed, the Diſpenſation requires rather Humiliation, than Exultation.

6*thly*, Were this Seal an Emblem of the Church's Wreſtlings under it, I ſee not how this and the Terror with which the Kings and Great Ones of the Earth were ſtruck can be reconciled, for they uſe to go very lightly under the Affliction of *Joſeph*.

We proceed to the Application of this *Seal*, where we have but one Opinion of Moment to examine after what is ſaid, and it is of theſe who adapt this *Seal* to that Period of the Church when *Conſtantine* was advanced to the Imperial Dignity, about the Beginning of the fourth Century. Theſe make the three preceeding Emperors to be the Truth of what is contained in the fifth Seal, becauſe they were wicked Perſecutors; and they make the Reign of *Conſtantine* ſucceeding them, and to his Power propagating *Chriſtianity*, and ſuppreſſing *Paganiſm*, and, for that End, bearing very hard upon ſome great Enemies of the Chriſtian Religion; which, they think, anſwers all in this Viſion.

Tho' I have a great Deference to the Judgment of ſome great Men of this Mind, yet I cannot go in with their Opinion, for theſe Reaſons, 1. In *Conſtantine*'s Time, only the firſt Enemy of the Goſpel, *viz.* Heatheniſm, was revealed; but neither the *Pope* or *Mahomet* had appeared in the World to make Havock of God's People; whereas this Period ſucceeds them both. 2. The Peace that the Church obtained in *Conſtantine*'s Time, was not laſting; for *Julian* ſucceeded him, and was a bitter Enemy to the Chriſtians: Whereas this Beginning of Sorrows to the Enemies will not ſtop till they be intirely cut off; for, as ſoon as the Time allotted for this Seal is over, the ſeventh will begin, which will put a full End to *Babylon*. 3. I ſhewed before, that theſe Seals have no Reſpect to any Revolution of any particular *Empire* or Kingdom, but in ſo far as the Church of God is therein concerned; and to apply this to the ſhort Reign of *Conſtantine*, (but about 30 Years) will not agree with the great Deſign of this Prophecy.

I am ready then to think, this Seal is to be applied to the Reformation, and the Times that have ſucceeded it, and that we are ſtill under it; for, ſince that Time, both the *Mahometan* and *Papal* Dominion are much retrenched, and rolled up like a Scroll: The *Turk* has loſt a great deal in *Aſia*, and much in *Europe*, ſince that Time; the *Pope* has loſt ſeveral intire *Kingdoms*, beſides very conſiderable Principalities; and, in general, the Kings of the Earth have thrown off much of that Dread, they ſometime paid his *pretended Infallibility*. In ſhort, it were very eaſy to find ſomething in this Period, that correſponds to every Part of this Viſion; but, it being a Matter ſo well known, and which we may have Occaſion afterwards more particularly to touch, I ſhall ſuperſede any further Enquiry now.

CHAP. VII.

THIS Chapter contains the ſecond Part of the ſixth Seal. Some, I own, ſay, This belongs to the ſeventh, and is an Introduction thereto. I ſhall be very eaſy about Words, ſo we can agree as to Things: If we will allow the Contents of this Chapter to take Place before what is contain'd in the eighth, I have nothing to ſay; But, if they alledge it contains ſomething either under, or after, I wiſh they would bring ſomething to fortify their ſingular Opinion, which I have not ſeen; and therefore, I hope, I may ſafely allow this to be a Part of the current Strain of the Prophecy. It has been always reckoned, that the Church, and all her Enemies, are like the two Scales of a Balance, that, while the one riſes, the other falls; and ſo, the firſt Part of this Seal being againſt the Enemies of God's Church, the other muſt of Neceſſity point out the Riſe and Advancement of the Church, which I take to be the Senſe of this Chapter. I preſume it will be eaſily granted me, at leaſt to begin with, that the Church of God conſiſts of *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and that both are contained in this Chapter, I ſhall endeavour to prove afterwards: And ſo this Chapter has two general Parts, 1. About the *Jews*, to *v.* 9. 2. About the *Gentiles*, to the Cloſe of the Chapter.

There is to be noticed, the Harveſt God would make of the *Jewiſh* Church, to *v.* 9. Where we have, 1. The Preliminaries, with no ſmall Solemnity, to *v.* 4. 2. The Number of God's Elect from among them, to *v.* 9.

1 AND after theſe Things I ſaw four Angels ſtanding on the four Corners of the Earth, holding the four Winds of the Earth, that the Wind ſhould not blow on the Earth, nor on the Sea, nor on any Tree.

2 And I ſaw another Angel aſcending from the Eaſt, having the Seal of the living God: And he cried with a loud Voice to the four Angels to whom it was given to hurt the Earth and the Sea,

3 Saying, Hurt not the Earth, neither the Sea, nor the Trees, till we have ſealed the Servants of our God in their Foreheads.

IN this we are to view theſe Things concerning the Purpoſe of God anent the *Jewiſh* Church, repreſented here, 1. By the Work of four Angels, *v.* 1. And, 2. The Work of One, but a greater Angel, *v.* 2, 3.

I. There is the Agency of *four Angels*, v. 1. Where we are to view, 1. The Agents. 2. Their Work. 3. The Deſign thereof.

1. We have the Agents, *Four Angels*. There are many ſubtil Thoughts about theſe Angels; ſome would have them bad Angels, others good; and ſome think, the Buſineſs may be managed without either. I only ſay, Whatever this Part of the Emblem ſignifies, I am ready to think they were good Angels in the Viſion; for, how can we imagine, God would imploy bad Angels to expreſs any ſpecial Emergent concerning his Church, eſpecially that they were to be near his Throne, which is a Privilege allowed to no bad Angel? But whom they repreſent, I confeſs it hard to determine: Yet, it ſeems plain from the Emblem, they are ſuch whom God uſes for holy Purpoſes; and therefore, I am ready to think, they muſt be good Men.

2. Their Work, *Standing on the four Corners of the Earth, holding the four Winds of the Earth*: To underſtand this, we have theſe Things to notice,

(1.) The Object, *The four Winds of the Earth*. As for the *Earth*, I am in no Strait to take it in a moſt proper Senſe for the *habitable Earth*, or earthly Men; nor do I ſee what their Drift is, that would underſtand thereby the Church, unleſs they would invert the moſt plain and natural Senſe of the Words, without any Neceſſity. As for *the Winds*, we had beſt bring the Meaning of them from other *prophetick* Paſſages of Scripture, where we find it differently underſtood; as ſometimes in a good Senſe, *ſo the Wind brought Quails to the* Iſraelites, *Numb.* xi. 31. Sometimes the Operations of the *Holy Spirit* are compared to *Wind*, John iii. 8. *The Wind bloweth where it liſteth.* But it ſeems to be taken in a very bad Senſe here, becauſe they are capable of hurting *the Earth, the Sea, and the Trees*: So that we are to enquire of Wind in this Acceptation; and we have ſome Scriptures at Hand to help us out with this, *Jer.* xlix. 36. *And upon* Elam *will I bring the four Winds of the four Quarters of Heaven, and will ſcatter them towards all theſe Winds.* That it is taken in an evil Senſe here,

is

is evident from the next Verſe, *v.* 37. *I will cauſe* Elam *to be diſmayed before her Enemies, and I will bring Evil upon them, even my fierce Anger, ſaith the Lord: And I will ſend the Sword after them.* This is certainly a Threatning againſt the *Perſians*, to deſtroy and diſperſe them; and ſo we have it expreſſed, *Jer.* li. 2. *I will ſend into* Babylon *Fanners, that ſhall fan her, and empty her Land.* We find *Winds* taken for falſe Doctrines, *Eph.* iv. 14. *That ye be not like Children, toſſed to and fro of every Wind of Doctrine.* We find it taken for Judgments in general, *Iſa.* xxvii. 8. *He ſtayeth his rough Wind in the Day of his Eaſt-wind.* The Prophet *Daniel* puts it out of all Doubt we may take it ſo, *Dan.* vii. 2. *I ſaw in my Viſion by Night, and behold, the four Winds of Heaven ſtrove upon the Sea*: Where we are to mean by it, terrible Commotions. If it ſhould be enquired, Which of theſe are to be underſtood here? I anſwer, In regard the Winds ſeem plainly to be what is intended in the ſeventh Seal, I am ready to think that both theſe may be ſafely comprehended therein.

(2.) Their Deed, *They held*, originally, *gripped forcibly*, as one does when they would put a Stop to any violent Thing, hard to be reſtrained. Here there is a Muttering again, If theſe Winds be Judgments inflicted of God, how will it be in the Power of any Angel to ſtop the ſame? And how can we believe that *good* Angels would ſo far ſtrive againſt God? This Difficulty is not great; for when God had ſet the Powers of the Earth looſe againſt his Peoples Enemies, if he had not reſtrained them, they would have puſht the Advantage to the utter Ruin of *Antichriſt*; But, in regard ſomething was to be done in Favours of his *Elect*, whom this Age is to produce, therefore he puts a Stop to their Keenneſs: And to this we may juſtly aſcribe the Peace the World now enjoys; elſe, ſince the Dawning of the Reformation, the *Popiſh* Party in *Europe*, and *Mahometan* in *Aſia*, had met with a great deal harder Meaſures: But that God has a conſiderable Remnant, both amongſt the diſperſed *Jews* and the *Gentiles*, to be gathered in; at leaſt, that many of the Elect are to ſpring from them.

(3.) Their Poſture, *Standing upon the four Corners of the Earth*, i. e. the four Cardinal Points; ſo that they were well placed for their Work, not at a Diſtance, but every one had his proper Province. It were no hard Matter, after all this, to point at ſome remarkable Steps of God's Providence, in reſtraining ſuch as might, in all Probability, have humbled the Pride of the Church's *Enemies*. Had we not a ſudden Peace, and without any accountable Grounds, patcht up betwixt *Britain* and *France*, in the late *Queen's* Time, when, had the Confederates purſued their Advantage, *France* had been brought very low? and how do we know, but there are many Souls in that Kingdom are to be won to Chriſt? May we not ſay the ſame for that Peace concluded betwixt the *Emperor* and the *Turk*? Yet it is plain, in all theſe, and many others might be mentioned, within theſe 150 Years the Church has loſt no Ground. To what can we aſcribe all this, but to the over-ruling Providence of God, which hath ſet theſe four Angels to their ſeveral Poſts, to hinder theſe Winds to blow, till the Elect of God be brought in, and then will the *laſt Seal* be opened?

3. The Deſign of this Exerciſe, *That the Wind ſhould not blow upon the Earth, nor the Sea, nor any Tree.* For us to ſcan each of theſe three, whatever Curioſity it may have, I apprehend would be but little edifying. In ſhort, I take the Meaning of it to be, Theſe Angels were ſent of God to reſtrain theſe Commotions were hatching generally thorow the World, for a Time, that neither good nor bad might ſuffer much thereby; all which was done for the Sake of the Church: And whenever God has gathered in his own, theſe Angels will be diſcharged from their Task. Which brings us to the

II. The Work of *One*, but a *greater Angel* than the other four, *v.* 2, 3. This *Angel* hath ſeveral Things particular about him to be conſidered; but, that our Thoughts may be confined, we would a little enquire, who this Angel is? Expoſitors are not at one in this Matter; nor ſhall I be at Pains to examine their ſeveral Thoughts, provided I can fix a Poſitive. The Text ſays of him, *I ſaw another Angel aſcending from the Eaſt, having the Seal of the Living God.* From which it is evident, in my Opinion, this is no ordinary Angel, who had ſuch a Truſt as the *Seal of God*, and ſuch a Power as command the other Angels; ſurely he is no leſs than the *Lord-Keeper of Heaven*, i. e. *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Angel or *Meſſenger of the Covenant*, as he is deſigned, *Mal.* iii. 1. To confirm this, we would offer theſe few Reaſons.

1. He is deſigned *another Angel*, which diſtinguiſheth him from the *former four*: And they being *good Angels*, it ſays he was *more*, yea, no leſs than the *Head of Angels*.

2. He is ſaid to *aſcend from the Eaſt*; I ſhould rather incline to render it, *He did appear like the Riſing Sun*: Nor am I the firſt has challenged this Piece of our Tranſlation. This is acknowledged by all to be cloſſer to the Original, unleſs we think the Prepoſition ἀπὸ, will not allow ſuch an Expoſition. But I anſwer, It is a very

natural Signification of this Propoſition, to be turned *like*, or, *after the Manner of*; as is evident from *Paul's* Words, 2 *Tim.* i. 3. *I thank God, whom I ſerve from my Forefathers*; where it is plain it ſhould be rendered *after the Manner of*, or *like my Forefathers*. If we ſo turn it here, as I ſee no Reaſon why we ſhould not, then it is a glorious Appearance of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, compared in Beauty and Glory to the *Riſing Sun*: And he is as much the *true Sun*, as the *true Vine*, and called, *Mal.* iv. 2. *The Sun of Righteouſneſs, which ariſeth upon the Souls of his People, with Healing under his Wings.*

3. He has a notable Badge of Honour, *the Seal of the living God.* Where we have ſeveral Arguments, proving this *Angel* to be Jeſus Chriſt; 1. Becauſe none but he knew who were the *Servants of God*, 2 Tim. ii. 19. *The Foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this Seal, The Lord knoweth who are his.* And he ſays, *John* x. 14. *I know my Sheep.* 2. None elſe has the *Seal of God* but Chriſt; the *Seal of God* is the *Holy Spirit*, Epheſ. iii. 30. *The Spirit of God, whereby we are ſealed unto the Day of Redemption.* Nor will it hinder we ſhould underſtand this of the Redeemer, becauſe, in another Part of the Viſion, he is repreſented as opening the Seals; for he may be pointed at under different Types.

Having thus from the Text eſtabliſhed the Senſe of the Perſon, we are next to view, 1. To whom he ſpeaks. 2. The Orders he gave.

1. To whom he ſpeaks, *He cried with a loud Voice unto the four Angels*: It was neceſſary he ſhould cry with a loud Voice, to be heard at the four Corners of the Earth. It is queſtioned, What were theſe four Angels? Some think they were evil Angels, becauſe they had Power to hurt: But this will not prove; for, we read, God gave a Commiſſion to good Angels to chaſtiſe his own People; and we are ſure he has imployed good Angels to execute Judgments upon his Enemies, *Acts* xii. 23. *The Angel of the Lord ſmote* Herod. It would appear then theſe four Angels are the ſame we heard of, *v.* 1. who held the Winds; and as ſoon as they were to quit their Hold, all was to run into the greateſt Confuſion, both by Sea and Land: Yet was not this to fall out, till under the ſeventh Seal.

2. We have the Orders he gave theſe Angels, *v.* 3. *Hurt not the Earth, neither the Sea, nor the Trees*, &c. *i. e.* Do no Harm to any Thing good or bad. Here we have, 1. The Thing. 2. The Time.

(1.) The *Thing*. They were to keep every Thing in the State it was in, and ſuffer nothing to catch Harm by theſe Winds, which, if let looſe, would be of dangerous Conſequence to the whole Earth: Whence 'tis plain, it fares well with the Earth for the Sake of God's Servants; all, even the moſt wicked, have a Reprieve till Chriſt's little Flock be ſhed. Well may we then ſay, *That Believers are the* Atlas *of the World, becauſe, for their Sake, God ſpares the World.*

(2.) We have the Duration of theſe Orders, *Till we have ſealed the Servants of our God in their Foreheads.* Where we are to obſerve theſe few Things, 1. What was to be done, *Sealing*; this is certainly a Mark of Diſtinction, ſuch as was typified, *Exod.* xii. 15. by *ſprinkling of the Blood of the Paſchal Lamb upon the Lintels and Poſts of the Doors, that the deſtroying Angel might not touch any under that Roof.* The like we find elſewhere, *Ezek.* ix. 4. *Go through the Midſt of the City, and ſet a Mark upon the Foreheads of the Men that ſigh.* It was the Cuſtom of theſe Eaſtern, as it is of all other Countries, to mark their Flocks and Cattle, that they might diſtinguiſh them from others; to which this certainly alludes: And ſo it is fooliſh to believe there was any viſible Mark, as the Croſs, or any other Thing externally; for theſe Notions the Papiſts have borrowed from Heathens. 2. Who were to be thus ſealed or marked, *the Servants of God*, i. e. all Believers; or yet wider, all the Elect of God, whether they are actually called or not. It is true, while they are deſigned the *Servants of God*, it inſinuates they were actually and effectually called; yet we may allow this to contain a Reſpite, till God ſhould actually bring them in to Chriſt, who, at the Beginning of this Seal, might be Strangers to him. 3. Where they were to be ſealed, *in their Foreheads*, or Countenances. To wave many Notions about this, I am ready to think with others, that nothing is elſe to be meant here, but the *open and avowed Profeſſion of the Name of Chriſt, from a hearty Conviction and Perſwaſion of the Truth of what he has revealed from the Father*; which in an evil Time is a good Sign, and may be juſtly deſigned a *Seal*, becauſe whatever external Diſcoveries they make, are nothing elſe but the Tranſcript of what is really written by the *Finger of God* upon their Hearts, agreeable to the Tenor of the new Covenant. 4. By whom they are ſealed; it is ſaid in the plural Number, *We*: Some think this to be meant of the other four Angels, in Conjunction with this fifth; but theſe four are fixed

fixed to their Poſts, as we ſee, *v.* 1. and had their proper Work aſſigned them. Others think Chriſt is ſpeaking of himſelf, in Conjunction with the Miniſters of the Goſpel, by whom he works, and to whom he has promiſed his Preſence to the End of the World. Others, again, to make the Meaning more full, think, He is ſpeaking of himſelf, and the Holy Ghoſt, whereby Believers are ſealed unto the Day of Redemption. It would appear theſe laſt two Opinions ſhould not be ſeparated. And from the whole, we may notice, that Sincerity in the Faith, and Uprightneſs in Converſation, are the beſt Security a Soul can have againſt all Evils whatſomever.

4 And I heard the Number of them that were ſealed: *And there were* ſealed an Hundred and forty and four thouſand of all the Tribes of the Children of Iſrael.

5 Of the Tribe of Judah *were* ſealed Twelve thouſand. Of the Tribe of Reuben *were* ſealed Twelve thouſand. Of the Tribe of Gad *were* ſealed Twelve thouſand.

6 Of the Tribe of Aſer *were* ſealed Twelve thouſand. Of the Tribe of Nehpthalim *were* ſealed Twelve thouſand. Of the Tribe of Manaſſes *were* ſealed Twelve thouſand.

7 Of the Tribe of Simeon *were* ſealed Twelve thouſand. Of the Tribe of Levi *were* ſealed Twelve thouſand. Of the Tribe of Iſſachar *were* ſealed Twelve thouſand.

8 Of the Tribe of Zabulon *were* ſealed Twelve thouſand. Of the Tribe of Joſeph *were* ſealed Twelve thouſand. Of the Tribe of Benjamin *were* ſealed Twelve thouſand.

Here we have the Number of God's Elect from among the *Jews*, at, or a little after the opening of the ſixth Seal, at leaſt, before the opening of the ſeventh. Where I ſee no Difficulty, except as to the Application, and the Nomination of the *twelve Tribes*, which does not agree with the Mention of them in other Places of Scripture. That we may have ſome diſtinct View of this intricate Portion of the Prophecy, which, I think, is more owing to the croſs Methods of Expoſitors, than the Obſcurity of the Text, I ſhall propoſe and anſwer a few Queſtions.

Queſt. 1. Of whom does the Prophet ſpeak here?

Expoſitors are divided according to their different Views of the *Chronology*: Some think, it is allenarly meant of the *Gentiles*, and that the *Spirit* is here ſpeaking of the *Chriſtian Churches* thorow the World in an Old Teſtament Stile; as the Apoſtle tells the *Galatians*, Gal. iii. 29. *If ye be Chriſt's, then are ye* Abraham's. But I cannot think this Notion can take Place, but muſt be underſtood properly of the *Jews*, as diſtinguiſhed from the *Gentiles*, in reſpect of their Original concerning the Fleſh: And I offer theſe Reaſons therefore,

1. Becauſe the Account of the Tribes is ſo accurate, I ſee not how, in any tolerable Senſe, we can anſwer for the Redundancy of the Expreſſions if we take it for the *Gentiles*; for certainly, the *diſtinct naming* of the *Tribes* muſt ſignify ſomething, which theſe learned Men have not been at the Pains to offer the leaſt Conjecture about. And it is a common and received Maxim, That there is no *loſt*, much leſs *uſeleſs Expreſſion* in the *Scripture*; which alſo our Lord plainly affirms, *Mat.* v. 18. *Verily, I ſay unto you, Till Heaven and Earth paſs, one Jot or one Title ſhall in nowiſe paſs from the Law, till all be fulfilled*: So that this is to be underſtood of the *Jews* moſt properly.

2. We have all the Reaſon in the World to believe the *Jews* will be converted, and brought in to the *Gentiles*; the Apoſtle *Paul* reaſons learnedly upon this Point, *Rom.* xi. and tells us, It will be at ſuch a Time, when there will be the leaſt outward Appearance thereof: And this being but a partial Converſion, no Wonder it was not ſo obſervable.

3. Becauſe we have the *Gentiles* mentioned, *v.* 9. What Propriety of Language would it be, to mention firſt the *Gentiles*, by a *definite Number*, for the Space of five Verſes, under the Character of *Jews*, and yet, *v.* 9. immediately after, to give a particular Account of the *Gentiles*, under their proper Deſignation, in an *indefinite Number*? For the *Angels*, that could number the *Jews*, were not able to count the *Gentiles*; and ſo it is ſaid, *which no Man could number*. Certainly, let us take 144000, and a *numberleſs Number*, in what Senſe we pleaſe, there is a great Difference betwixt them; and

ſo we judge it ſafeſt to underſtand this of the *Jews Converſion*, and ſeems to be Part of that notable Event foretold by *Zechariah*, Chap. xii. 10. *I will pour upon the Houſe of* David, *and the Inhabitants of* Jeruſalem, *the Spirit of Grace and Supplication, and they ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced.* Yet I would not have this to extend to the laſt Converſion of the *Jews*, at which Time, it is ſaid, And all *Iſrael ſhall be ſaved.* Some tell us, This Prophecy was fulfilled in the Beginning of the Goſpel, *Acts* ii. 41. *when three Thouſand were added to the Church.* But, it is plain, that cannot be the full Extent of that Prophecy, becauſe it is a National Reformation which is ſpoken of in that Place, *Zech.* xii. 12. And *the Land ſhall mourn*, i. e. the whole People of the *Jews*; which has not yet been fully verified, nor will, even when this 144000 are converted; for theſe are only the Firſt-fruits under the ſixth Seal, but the Harveſt will be afterwards.

Queſt. 2. In what Senſe are we to underſtand 144000?

There is more Difficulty, tho' of leſs Importance, in this, than the former: Some contend, there is a Definite taken for an Indefinite Number; Others think, it is to be ſtrictly taken for a preciſe Number: For my Share, I think it a Matter of ſmall Moment which of them take Place, provided it be underſtood that a great Number is meant. It is true, we find the Tale of the *Iſraelites* much higher in *Moſes*'s Time, *Numb.* ii. *Six hundred thouſand, and Three thouſand and five hundred and fifty*; And all theſe beſides the *Levites*, whoſe Number came to *Twenty and two thouſand*, Numb. iii. 39. But their Number was far greater in *David*'s Time, 2 *Chron.* xxi. 5. when *they were Fifteen hundred and ten thouſand.* The Smalneſs of the Number in this Place, gives Ground to ſome to think, there is no *National Converſion* meant here: But yet, tho' it will not infer a total Converſion, it will not thence follow it is not National, conſidering there are a good Number out of every Tribe, and all together are a great Number; eſpecially, if we allow a greater and more univerſal Reduction to follow on the Fall of *Babylon*, as the Apoſtle ſays, *Rom.* xi. 16. *If the Firſt-fruits be holy, the Lump is alſo holy.* That Objection againſt the Accuracy of this Calculation ſeems to have little Weight in it, That ſince their Diſperſion, the whole Tribes are gone into the utmoſt Confuſion; and that few among them can give an Account what they belong to; nay, few of the moſt learned amongſt them, know where the moſt Part of them are: For this will not ſay but God knows exactly where they are, and to what Tribes they belong.

Queſt. 3. Why are there an equal Number from every Tribe, ſince we are ſure theſe Tribes were never equal in their Numbers?

It is thought by many, we are not to ſtick preciſely to the Number 12. but thereby to underſtand a great Number, becauſe it is one of the Sacred Numbers, and that the greateſt. We read indeed of a great many *Twelves*, as twelve Tribes, twelve Apoſtles, twelve Gates in the *New Jeruſalem*, and a great many other Inſtances; and ſome tell us, The Square of Twelve is the moſt comprehenſive and ſolid of all the Roots: We are ſure from the Text, that 12 Times 12 makes a very conſiderable Number; and ſome would have the Senſe of it to be all within the Election of Grace. Some think, the Apoſtle ſaw them in twelve Lines, and 12000 in every Line, and have odd Thoughts about this Diſpoſition. But all theſe Things are groundleſs, and ſome of them impertinent Curioſities, and therefore we paſs them.

Queſt. 4. Why are the Tribes put out of their natural Order?

This perhaps may be done, to ſhew, that with God there is no Reſpect of Perſons: Nor is it any extraordinary Thing in Scripture, to find little Regard had to Birth-right, but People are named according to their Behaviour. I have no Inclination to rake into the Miſcarriages of ſome of the Patriarchs, who have loſt their Birth-right in the Order of the Rolls here, becauſe we cannot certainly determine whether theſe Sins were the very Cauſes of inverting their Order, or if it were for the Miſcarriages of ſome of the Tribes, rather than the Patriarchs from which they ſprung; there are Conjectures about both. Others tell us, The Reaſon is, to give Preference to the Tribe of *Judah*, commonly deſigned, the *Royal Tribe*, becauſe Chriſt did ſpring therefrom: This may ſatisfy any ſerious Perſon, why *Judah* is ſet foremoſt. As for other Things, tho' noted by great Men, I paſs.

Queſt. 5. Why is the Tribe of *Dan* omitted?

Some tell us, This might have happened through the Careleſneſs of the Tranſcribers, who might have written Δαν; and others, after that, by a Miſtake, have writ μαν, and at Length *Manaſſeh*: But this is a coarſe Way of ſolving Difficulties, eſpecially that we find ſome one of the Tribes omitted in other Places, where ſuch a Shift is not thought of; particularly, when *Moſes* is bleſſing the Children of *Iſrael*, Deut. xxxiii. there is no Notice taken of *Simeon*, and both *Dan* and *Zebulon* are omitted in the Numeration of the Tribes,

and

and their Poſſeſſions in *David's* Times, 1 *Chron.* v. &c. Others again tell us, The *Spirit* of God deſignedly left out this Tribe, becauſe of their Idolatry, for *Jeroboam* had ſet up the Calves at *Dan*. Others ſay, This Tribe is not mentioned, becauſe *Antichriſt* was to come of that Tribe; but the Grounds they adduce for it are very weak, and unable to ſupport it. It is plain, there could be but twelve mentioned from the general Account of the Sealed; and ſeeing *Levi* is mentioned here, who had no Inheritance amongſt the Children of *Iſrael*, it was neceſſary ſome one ſhould be left out, elſe the Number of the Sealed would exceed the Number of 144000 by 12000. This has driven ſome to ſeek a Myſtery in the Omiſſion; but they have not been very lucky that Way either. Others tell us, It might be, becauſe there were none of this Tribe elected: *But ſecret Things belong to God.* The moſt probable Opinion is of theſe, who ſay, This Tribe had but a very ſmall Portion of their own, having neglected to take Poſſeſſion of all their Lot; for it is ſaid, *Judg.* xviii. 1. *The Children of the Tribe of* Dan *ſought them an Inheritance to dwell in, for unto that Day all their Inheritance had not fallen to them.* And therefore, of Neceſſity, the *Danites* were obliged to diſperſe themſelves through all the Tribes of *Iſrael*, and ſo they may be numbred amongſt them; this is the ſofteſt Way of accounting for the Matter.

Queſt. 6. Why is not *Ephraim* mentioned here, eſpecially that it is ſaid, *Gen.* xlviii. 5. Manaſſeh *and* Ephraim *ſhould be ranked among the Tribes of* Iſrael?

Some ſay, Becauſe *Ephraim* was the Head of a graceleſs and rebelious Faction, God ſuppreſſed their Name here, to diſcourage the like in all Time coming, and to ſhew his Averſion to *Idolatry*, of which this Tribe was very guilty. But, tho' *Ephraim* be not mentioned, *Joſeph* is: And that both *Joſeph* and *Manaſſeh* are here, they make up the two Tribes that ſpring of *Joſeph*.

We are next to view the State of the *Gentile* Church in the reſt of the Chapter: Where we have, 1. The Viſion of the *Gentile* Church, to *v.* 13. And, 2. The Explication of this Viſion by an Angel to *John*, ad finem.

9 And after this I beheld, and lo, a great Multitude, which no Man could number, of all Nations, and Kindreds, and People, and Tongues, ſtood before the Throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white Robes, and Palms in their Hands,

10 And cried with a loud Voice, ſaying, Salvation to our God, which ſitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb.

11 And all the Angels ſtood round about the Throne, and *about* the Elders, and the four Beaſts, and fell before the Throne on their Faces, and worſhipped God,

12 Saying, Amen: Bleſſing, and Glory, and Wiſdom, and Thankſgiving, and Honour, and Power, and Might be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

Here we have, 1. An Account of the *Gentile* Church, *v.* 9, 10. 2. The Guard of both the *Jewiſh* and *Gentile* Churches, *v.* 11, 12.

But, before I enter upon the Conſideration of theſe, it will be needful to determine this Queſtion, Whether the Prophet is here ſpeaking of the *Militant* or *Triumphant* Church? which will clear our Way much in the Explication; for Expoſitors are ſplit about this: And I think it muſt be underſtood of the *Militant*, and not of the *Triumphant*. To clear this, I offer theſe few Conſiderations.

1. I yield there are Expreſſions here might well agree to the *Triumphant* Church; from which we, however, can no more determine this to be abſolutely meant of the glorified Church, than we can believe the Judgments will befal the Church's Enemies, belong to the laſt Judgment, becauſe the Expreſſions ſeem to be caſt in the ſame Mould: This, we think, is made pretty plain, from what is above ſaid.

2. This Viſion, as all the reſt are, is only to be underſtood *typically*: From whence it is plain, we are under no Neceſſity to think all is perfectly real, tho' no doubt the Truth will exactly correſpond to the Type, yet in ſuch a Manner, as the World would not underſtand the ſame without a further Explication; for which we ſee *John* needed Help from one of the *Elders* to inform him of the Import of this Figure, elſe he could not have reacht the ſame himſelf, nor communicated it to us.

3. We have the Explication of the State of the Church repreſented in this Figure, all in the future Tenſe, *v.* 15. He that ſitteth upon the *Throne, ſhall* dwell among them:

They *ſhall* hunger no more, *&c.* which ſhews us, whatever their Condition was then, it would grow better. And that their Exerciſe is rendered in the Preterit, *v.* 14. is to ſatisfy us, God had honoured them to be faithful and patient, and now they were to meet with Enlargement.

4. If this ſhould be allowed to point out the *Triumphant* State of the Church, it would make a wonderful Remove from the afflicted State of the Church on Earth in Time, to her glorified Condition after the Reſurrection; betwixt which two Extremes there is certainly a great Space or Interval. But to imagine, according to the Narrative here, the Church to emerge from a Plunge of Adverſity, to a State of Peace and Enlargement, is no more than what we are warranted to believe from the whole Strain of the Promiſes. Nor are we under any Neceſſity to believe, that the ſame Perſons who had ſuffered under the three perſecuting Seals, were to taſte of the Church's Peace on Earth; it is ſufficient to believe, the ſame Spirit of Piety, and Zeal for God and Godlineſs, ſhall appear after the Perſecution, which was in the Perſecuted: As we are not bound to believe that *John Baptiſt* was really and perſonally *Elijah*, but only had his Spirit and Zeal.

But there is another Difficulty why the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the *Militant* Church, tho' ſomewhat enlarged, in ſuch Terms as may well agree to her triumphant Condition? To clear this, I offer theſe Conſiderations.

1. Becauſe the *Victories* that the Church ſhall obtain over her Enemies, are one *continued Courſe* of *Triumph* and Succeſs, from one Degree to another, till at length ſhe ſhall appear perfect before the Lord in *Zion*: And it was neceſſary to encourage a poor *wreſtling* Church, in ſuch Terms as did repreſent her compleat State, which is ſtill approaching; *And her Path will be like the ſhining Light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect Day.*

2. It is very ordinary in this Prophecy to repreſent the *Church* by *Heaven*, and its *flouriſhing Condition* by the *Happineſs of the Glorified*; which indeed differs only in Degree. And when that happy State of the Church comes, upon the Fall of *Antichriſt*, it will bring a Sort of *Heaven* to the Earth: But of this we will hear more afterwards.

3. We have the ſame Expreſſions uſed by the Prophets, of the Goſpel-State of the Church, *Iſa.* xxv. 6. *In this Mountain ſhall the Lord of Hoſts make unto all People a Feaſt of fat Things,* &c *v.* 7. *And he will deſtroy, in this Mountain, the Face of the Covering caſt over all People.* v. 8. *He will ſwallow up Death in Victory; the Lord will wipe off all Tears from their Faces.* And again, *Iſa.* xxxv. 10. *The Ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return to* Zion *with Songs, and everlaſting Joy upon their Heads: And they ſhall obtain Joy and Gladneſs, and Sighing and Sorrow ſhall flee away.* And further, *Iſa.* li. 11. *The Redeemed of the Lord ſhall return, and come with Singing unto* Zion, *and everlaſting Joy ſhall be upon their Heads,* &c.

4. The outward and temporal *Judgments* of the Church's Enemies are repreſented by *Hell*, Rev. vi. 16, 17. and it is but juſt, the *Deliverances* of the Church ſhould be repreſented in Expreſſions that look like the *Joys of Heaven.*

I. And now we proceed to view the Apoſtle's Account of the *Gentile* Church. There is indeed an Odds betwixt the Introduction of this and the former; for it is ſaid, *v.* 4. *I heard the Number of them which were ſealed:* And here it is written, *After this I looked, and lo, a great Multitude,* &c. They read theſe two together, and then think the Meaning to be, I firſt heard, and then ſaw what I heard; ſo that they would have it to be the ſame Thing that ſtruck before his Ears, and now is repreſented to his Eyes. I cannot much eſteem the Fetch of this, becauſe two Things manifeſtly ſtart in the Face of it, 1. He heard a definite Number, 144000; but when he ſees them, *no Man*, or *none*, whether Angel or Man, *can number them.* 2. They were all *Jews* he heard of, now there is not a *Jew* amongſt them: Or, if we will have *Kindreds* ſignify *Tribes*, yet ſtill it is but a fourth Part of them; and then to quadruple theſe, we ſhould not make them numberleſs: And yet I think it would be hard to ſay there were no other *Clans* or *Tribes* in the World but *Jews*, eſpecially that we are ſure all the Nations of the World were ſubdivided into their *ſmaller Families* or *Kindreds*; and therefore I think it may be concluded ſafely, what he heard, and ſaw, were not the ſame. And that it is ſaid, *After this*; I think will ſignify no more than this, As ſoon as the Tale of the *Jews* was over, he had this Viſion of the *Gentiles*, whom we are to notice, 1. In their Number. 2. Their Origin. 3. Their Poſture. 4. Their Habit. And, 5. Their Voice.

1. Their Number, *A great Multitude which no Man* [none] *could number.* This Way of *Supputation* makes their Account next to *infinito*, and ſo at leaſt may be reaſonably ſuppoſed to exceed the greateſt Number of the *Jews* we met with, 1501000,

1501000, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 5. beſides Women and Children which were not numbered, and may be preſumed reaſonably to exceed the other; ſo that to be ſure theſe differed from the former.

2. We have their Quality or Origine, *Of all Nations, and Kindreds, and People, and Tongues.* The Words we had before, *Chap.* v. 9. and it plainly ſeems to ſay, All the Converts among the *Gentiles* are comprehended here: And that as the former were the *firſt Fruits* of the *Jews*, ſo theſe of the *Gentiles* in ſuch conſiderable Numbers. The Prophet *Jeremiah* has had an Eye to this, when he ſays, *Jer.* iii. 17. *At that Time, they ſhall call* Jeruſalem *the Throne of the Lord, and all the Nations ſhall be gathered unto it, unto the Name of the Lord.* That this Prophecy belongs not to the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation, is certain; for at this Time, he ſays, *v.* 16. *In thoſe Days, ſaith the Lord, they ſhall ſay no more, The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord: Neither ſhall it come to Mind, neither ſhall they remember it, neither ſhall they viſit it, neither ſhall that be done any more.* I confeſs, I ſee not how to apply this Prophecy but to this *Seal* in Part, and perfectly to the *Millennium*, and then they contribute to give each other Light.

3. Their Poſture, *They ſtood before the Throne, and before the Lamb.* We explained all above, *Chap.* iv 3. and *Chap.* v. 6. except their Poſture: It is ſaid, *They ſtood*, which ſeems to import, 1. The Difference betwixt them and their Enemies, *who fled to Rocks and Caves*, Chap. vi. 15. 2. Their *Abſolution*: For to *ſtand in Judgment*, is to be aſſoilzied; as *to fall*, is to be condemned. 3. Their *holy Boldneſs* and Confidence in God. 4. An *obedientiall* and reverend Frame of Soul, for they were waiting their great Maſter's Orders. 5. The *Stability* of their State, they were not in a wavering Condition.

4. Their Habit, in two Branches; the firſt denoting their Nature, *Clothed with white Robes.* The Senſe of this we gave before, *Chap.* vi. 11. which muſt be underſtood of the ſame Equipage; with this Difference, That the former were poſted in the Upper-houſe, but theſe are below; but in a far better Caſe than the firſt before their Tranſlation, for they have large Communications of the Spirit, and have the Satisfaction to behold what the others prayed for. The ſecond is another Emblem of their deſirable State, *They had Palms in their Hands.* This declares their *Victory*, for Palms was a Sign of it: So we ſee, when our Lord was riding in Triumph to *Jeruſalem*, John xii. 13. *The Multitude cut down Branches of Palm-trees, and went forth to meet him.* All this Multitude then were Conquerors, at leaſt in Part, thro' the Blood of the Lamb. Again, the *Palm* is a Sign of Proſperity and Growth; they were on the growing Hand, *Pſal.* xcii. 12. *The Righteous ſhall flouriſh like the Palm-tree.*

5. Their Voice, *v.* 10. *They cried with a loud Voice, ſaying, Salvation*, &c. This is a moſt proper Song for them who were bleſſed with a *double* Deliverance, from the Power of *Sin*, and the Malice of their *Enemies*; both which, they owed to the Goodneſs and Faithfulneſs of him that ſat on the Throne, and to the *Lamb.* This Song is nothing elſe, but the Abridgment of that new Song we had, and explained, *Chap.* v. 9.

II. We have the Life-guard of all the Saints, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, v. 11, 12. *All the Angels*, &c. whom we had numbered, *Chap.* v. 11. *Ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and Thouſands of thouſands.* We have them poſted the very ſame Way, and much the ſame Way imployed: The Differences betwixt the Places, I ſhall take up in theſe Particulars.

1. In this we have mentioned a Poſture of Worſhip, *They fell before the Throne*, &c. which is not contained iu the firſt; the Reaſon is, In the firſt *John* only heard them, but here they are preſented in a Type to his Eye. It would be needleſs to enquire into the Manner of *Angels* bowing, ſeeing all *John* ſaw was Emblematical; the Truth whereof is, All the poſſible Expreſſions of Reverence and Submiſſion to the Will of God, were moſt affectionatly paid by theſe ſpiritual Attendants to God the *Father*, and the *Lamb*, who had honoured them with the Revelation of what is contained in the *Sixth Seal.*

2. The *Angels*, in their *Song* here, begin and end with *Amen*; whereas, *Chap.* v. it is not mentioned at all: But, we may take the firſt as an Approbation of the Song of the Saints, or as a Declaration of their Satisfaction with the revealed Will of God, concerning his Friends and Foes; And the ſecond as the Concluſion of their own Song, and ſo it is a cordial Aſſent to what they had been exerciſed in.

3. The *Angels* in this Place have moreNotes in their Song than in *Chap.* v. the Reaſon is, Becauſe now they had more Matter from the Opening of the *ſix Seals*; yet we have nothing in this Song, which will not be found either in the Song of the Angels, or of the reſt, and which will be found there explained: Nor is it inconſiſtent for them

to ſing over what had been uttered by the other Creatures, in the Praiſes of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

13 And one of the Elders anſwered, ſaying unto me, What are theſe which are arayed in white Robes? and whence came they?

14 And I ſaid unto him, Sir, thou knoweſt. And he ſaid unto me, Theſe are they which came out of great Tribulation, and have waſhed their Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb.

15 Therefore are they before the Throne of God, and ſerve him Day and Night in his Temple; and he that ſitteth on the Throne ſhall dwell among them.

16 They ſhall hunger no more, neither thirſt any more, neither ſhall the Sun light on them, nor any Heat.

17 For the Lamb, which is in the Midſt of the Throne, ſhall feed them, and ſhall lead them unto living Fountains of Waters: And God ſhall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes.

I ſaid before, that this is the Explication of the *Church* among the *Gentiles*. It wants not its own Difficulties; however, I am ready to think, we have nothing to do with theſe, who make the 144000 to be the ſame with theſe mentioned *v.* 9. after what is ſaid. But then, applying the 9 & 10 Verſes to the *Gentiles*, in Diſtinction from the *Jews*, the Matter will not be ſo eaſy: For ſome tell us, The *Jews* were *ſealed*, but the *Gentiles* not; and that the *Gentiles* have *white Robes*, about which we hear nothing as to the *Jews*. There are theſe Conſiderations the Context affords, may ſtop Curioſity, and even adminiſter ſomething of Satisfaction: As, 1. The Apoſtle did not ſee the *Jews*, he only heard of their Number, and therefore he could not tell whether they were *clothed in White* or not: As to the *Gentiles*, he only *ſaw them*, and the *Spirit* was not ſo particular as to the *Sealing*; and ſo allowed him, and after him the Church in all Ages, to judge of their State from their Appearance. But I am ready to believe, it is moſt conſiſtent with all the Steps of the *Revelation*, to allow the *Jews*, beſides their *Seal*, to have all ſignified by the *white Robes*, as a neceſſary Conſequence of the other: And the *Gentiles* to have the *Seal*, having the *white Robes*, which ſeems to be a Conſequent thereof. Or, according to others, the *Seal* and the *white Robes* are one and the ſame Thing, as often we find the ſame Thing repreſented by *different Emblems*; eſpecially that it is not refuſed but theſe in *White* were *ſealed*, but the Apoſtle did not *ſee* it, nor *hear* of it, as of the firſt. 2. This ſeems particularly to be deſigned the Explication of the *Gentile Church*, becauſe we read of Things aſſerted about them, and not of the other, as their *white Robes*, and their *ſtanding before the Throne*; which plainly ſays, We are to take this as the Meaning of theſe laſt mentioned, tho' neither of them is denied of the firſt. And therefore in this Senſe we ſhall underſtand the Viſion, and proceed to conſider the Explication as we have it in theſe Verſes: Where I ſhall notice theſe Things, 1. Two preliminary or introductory Queſtions, with an Anſwer, *v.* 13, 14. 2. The Explication of the Viſion, in the other Verſes.

I. We have *Two introductory Queſtions* propoſed, with an *Anſwer* to both, *v.* 13. and Beginning of 14th: Where we ſhall notice the *Queriſt*, and the *Queſtions* as well as the *Anſwers*.

1. The Queriſt, *One of the Elders*. It will ſignify nothing here to underſtand the *Firſt of the Elders*, ſeeing we have no Account of the Order of their Sitting, and as little of Diſtinction among them, as we find among the living Creatures; and ſo we muſt take it indifferently, for any one of them: Or, if it was that one that ſpoke to the Apoſtle, *Chap.* v. 5. becauſe he had now more Acquaintance with him. And that it is ſaid, *He anſwered and ſaid unto* John, is plainly after the Manner of the *Hebrews*, where *to anſwer*, is the ſame Thing as to ſpeak, or break Silence; as we find very often in Scripture, eſpecially in the *Goſpels*. I own, one has a very quaint Thought about this, *viz. This* Elder, being moved of God, did addreſs the Apoſtle, as we find it ſaid, becauſe *John* was queſtioning in his own Heart, What theſe might mean? And here the Elder returns not to his Words, but to his Thoughts, by a Counter-queſtion; a very common Way of Anſwering, even when Words have given Occaſion thereto. As for the Intendment of the Elder, we had it before, *Chap.* v. 5.

2. The

2. The *Queſtions*, which we find to be two; the Words are very eaſy in themſelves, and need no Explication, *What are theſe?* and, *Whence come they?* Yet, if we would look at the Mind of the *Enquirer*, ſome Queſtions are propoſed from *Ignorance*, and a Deſire of Information; But this is not the Caſe. Other Queſtions are deſigned to excite *Curioſity* in the *Anſwerer*, and to prepare him for what is to be added; And this is a Queſtioning in order to Inſtruction, which is plainly the Caſe; for, that the Elder askt *John*, is not that he might receive Satisfaction from him, but to diſpoſe *John* to receive Information from the *Elder*, becauſe the Apoſtle could not divine what they were he ſaw. We find a Queſtion to the ſame Purpoſe propoſed by an Angel, *John* xx. 15. *Woman, why weepeſt thou? whom ſeekeſt thou?* Where, it is evident, the *Angel* wanted not to be inſtructed by the *Woman*, but to raiſe her Deſire, and afterwards to ſatisfy her Demands; which is plainly the Caſe here.

3. The Anſwer to theſe Queſtions, *v.* 14. *I ſaid unto him, Sir, thou knoweſt.* It is hard here to know what the moſt thinking of our Expoſitors would be at in this, while they would have the Intent of this to an be intire Subjection of the Hearer to the Teacher. Now, if we allow the Inſtructer to be heavenly, we are to look for an Evidence from him before he believed; if he be earthly, then he is to appeal to the Word and the Teſtimony, which, in Point of Prophecy, has no Place hence. I think, it is evident, we are to make an Emblem in this, elſe there will be a great many Inferences cannot be juſtified; whereas, if we take it plainly in this Senſe, *John* tells the Angel what was plain Matter of Fact, He did not know what they were.

II. We have the Explication of the Viſion, where we are to conſider, 1. Their Origine, or whence they came. 2. What they are. 3. What the Promiſes are.

I do not think all theſe Things are to be taken ſtrictly.

1. Whence they came; which we have in three Particulars, and are of ſpecial Moment, tho' I cannot ſay all are agreed about the Meaning of them

(1.) *They came out of great Tribulation.* It is plain they have a very favourable Handle here, who underſtand it of temporal Afflictions; yet, we are ſure the Word is taken in a quite different Senſe, and we have it ſaid, *Mat.* vii. 14. τεθλιμμένη ἡ ὁδὸς, *For narrow is the Way*; which many underſtand of the Difficulty of paſſing from a *Natural* to a *Spiritual State*, wherein, I am ready to believe, they are right: And ſo the Senſe will be very plain here, and it is this, They have come out of a natural State. Should we take this ſo, we cannot be in any Difficulty; for the Meaning is, *All theſe are come out of Nature, and are regenerate.*

(2.) *They have waſhed their Clothes.* This ſeems to be explicative of the firſt; their Clothes were foul before, but now, by the Aſſiſtance of the Spirit of Grace, they are waſhed. It appears plain, this may well agree to the State of the Militant Church, yet it will not juſtify the Senſe of the *Arminians*, that it was in their Power to waſh their Clothes themſelves; it only ſays, They were not ſlack and negligent in the Uſe of theſe Means, to which God has promiſed his gracious Aſſiſtance: And, as little will this eſtabliſh the Connexion betwixt *Grace* and *Moral Serioufneſs*: But, it ſhews, theſe People were come out of a State of Careleſneſs, into a Condition of Diligence, which is the Effect, and not the Cauſe of Grace.

(3.) *They have made them white in the Blood of the Lamb.* This is the third and laſt Step they make in order to a State of Security; and now, if all the three be laid together, I confeſs it will be the greateſt Hardſhip to me to make out a State of Glory. From all, it will be no Difficulty to find them in a State of Grace; and that by theſe allowable Steps from the Word of God, being firſt brought off from a natural State by Repentance, and then bound down to the Exerciſe of religious Duties, whereby they come to an Intereſt in Chriſt, and get all their Garments waſhed in his Blood. There are two Steps mentioned, one to waſh off the *natural Tincture*, the other to make them *white*: Tho' I ſay not theſe Steps are in Juſtification, yet, I may venture to ſay, there is nothing can come nearer that State; for our Sins are not only rubbed out, but our Natures are purified and cleanſed, both which are owing to the *Blood of Chriſt*; all which are done upon Believers while they are in this World, and before they come to a State of Glory: So that here it is evident, this Condition may be ſo explained, as not favour that Opinion, further than aſſure us, a State of Grace differs from a State of Glory, only in Degree.

2. We may next ſee what they are, *v.* 15. where we may notice their Station, and their Exerciſe agreeable thereto.

(1.) *Therefore they ſtand before the Throne of God*, this is their Station; and there is added the Illative *therefore*, whereby we are not to underſtand they deſerved this Honour, but only there is a Promiſe, when Sinners are got rid of their natural State, they are then to be introduced into God's Preſence; by which we are to mean that gra-

cious Communion the Saints on Earth have with God, for theſe *have Acceſs with Boldneſs to the Throne of Grace.* And, if we mind, the Throne ſpoken of from the Beginning of Chapter 4th, is not the Throne of Glory in Heaven (tho' the Viſion was there) but the Throne of Grace in the Church: And, while it is ſaid they *ſtand* there, ſhews they have all theſe Privileges we explained before under this Word, *v.* 9. all which exactly agrees to the State of the Church of God on Earth.

2. Their Exerciſe, agreeable to their *State, They ſerve God Day and Night in his Temple.* They come not unto God's Preſence to gaze, but they are to be ſuitably employed. Of old, none went to the Temple but theſe who ſerved God: Under the New Teſtament, the Service of God is not tied to any Place or Houſe; but all that ſerve him in Spirit are accepted of him: Yet, to be ſure, there is an Alluſion to the *old Service,* which we find the Pſalmiſt alluding to in *Morals,* before the *Ceremonials* were abrogate, *Pſal.* cxxxiv. 1. *Bleſs ye the Lord, all ye Servants of the Lord, which by Night ſtand in the Houſe of the Lord.* This then ſhews, 1. Their Exerciſe, *They ſtood in the Houſe of the Lord,* i. e. they ſerved him according to his own Appointment, for none might go thither and offer ſtrange Fire: We ſee what came of *Nadab* and *Abihu* for their Raſhneſs this Way. And, 2. They were to do it *Day and Night,* i. e. continually. I confeſs, I have not ſeen any Thing advanced by theſe, who apply this to a State of Glory, could take off this Difficulty, that Angels in Heaven have no Difference of Day and Night: For, while they make the Senſe of it to be *continually,* they ſhould juſtify the Application of this Phraſe to *Angels,* or other Inhabitants in Heaven. And, I humbly think, a Body may be excuſed, that takes not their Word on it.

3. We are now to conſider the great and precious Promiſes made to them for the Time to come; their *State* was *excellent* for the Time, but it was only an *Earneſt* of what was to come. This we have at Length exhibite to us in many Particulars;

(1.) There is a Promiſe of the *Father's Cohabitation* with them, *He that ſitteth on the Throne ſhall dwell among them*; which ſeems to be the ſame in Subſtance with what the Apoſtle ſays, 2 *Cor.* vi. 16. *I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my People.* I doubt not but this has Alluſion to the *Pillar of Cloud by Day, and the Pillar of Fire by Night,* as theſe ſay, who make this an Emblem of Glory: But then, I am pretty confident, when they ſay ſo, it ruines their own Opinion; for the Pillar of Cloud is never called an Emblem of Heaven, of which it is not ſaid there are any Clouds; but of the Goſpel-Church, of which it is ſaid, all *ſee but darkly as in a Glaſs.* This is but a cloudy Diſpenſation at beſt.

(2.) There is a Promiſe of Satisfaction, *They ſhall hunger no more, neither thirſt any more.* I own theſe are Expreſſions that look liker a State of Glory, than a Militant Condition; yet this State of the Church, when compared with what is paſt, may be deſigned a State of Satisfaction, becauſe of the great Advantage the one has above the other. Beſides, it may contain a Promiſe they ſhould not want the *Bread of Life,* or the *Water of Life,* both which are comprehended under the Ordinances; The like Promiſe we find made to the New Teſtament Church, *Iſa.* xlix. 9, 10. *Thou ſhalt ſay to the Priſoners, Go forth; to them that are in Darkneſs, Shew yourſelves: They ſhall feed in the Ways, and their Paſtures ſhall be in high Places; they ſhall not hunger nor thirſt.*

(3.) A Promiſe of Freedom from all Trouble, comparatively to what they were ſubjected to, *Neither ſhall the Sun light on them any more*; The Sun is often an Emblem of Perſecution, *Mat.* xiii. 6, 21. *When the Sun was up, they were ſcorched*; which we have afterwards explained, *When Perſecution and Tribulation ariſeth.* The ſame we find in that forecited *Iſa.* xlix.. 10. So, I think, we ſafely may affirm, after this *Seal* there will be no more ſuch Perſecution, as the Church has formerly ſuffered; but it does not ſay, there will be no Trouble to moleſt her.

(4.) A Promiſe of daily Proviſion, which may be a good Ground of the three former Promiſes, becauſe we find it brought in with an Illative, *For the Lamb which is in the Midſt of the Throne ſhall feed them,* &c. We have explained all the Terms in this, except that of Feeding, which I nowhere remember to be applied to the *Triumphant Church,* but often to the *Militant,* and that in her beſt State. And therefore, we find *David,* Pſal. xxiii. 2. calls *The Lord his Shepherd,* and promiſes himſelf *Feeding by the green Paſtures.* And the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſays, *Chap.* xii. 3. *With Joy ſhall ye draw Water out of the Wells of Salvation.* To apply this to a State of Glory, we would be a great Loſs, for I know no Scripture that ſpeaks of Feeding there; and it is very reaſonable, for Feeding ſuppoſes Growth, which has no Place in Heaven: And I find the Expoſitors that would apply this Paſſage that Way, ſo much ſtraitned, that they do not offer ſo much as one Scripture to ſupport this Part of their Argument.

(5.) Per-

(5.) Perpetual Conſolation, *And God ſhall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes.* This is a Paſſage (tho' much built upon) that cannot be applied to any Condition on this Side of Glory; we are ſure, it is ſpoke of with Reſpect to the Goſpel-ſtate of the Church, in the plaineſt Terms we can think of, *Iſa.* xxv. 8. *He will ſwallow up Death in Victory, and the Lord God will wipe all Tears from off all Faces, and the Rebuke of his People ſhall be taken off from all the Earth.* Now, if this from *Iſaiah* may be, as it muſt be, applied to the Church on Earth; how can we refuſe, but the Words of our Text look the ſame Way, eſpecially that both of them are *Prophetical*?

When we have gone through the Whole of this *Seal*, we ſee there is no Ground to alter our firſt Thoughts, that the Import of it is juſt now in fulfilling; but, to aſſign a Time when it will be over, is more than any Man, with a good Conſcience, can venture upon. There are ſome general Calculations of the Periods of this Prophecy will afterwards fall under our Conſideration; but it is plain, they all are ſo dark, no Man in his Wits dare venture to be poſitive. As far as the Threed of this Revelation according to the plain Text will carry us, we ſhall enquire in theſe Things when we come at them.

In the mean Time, it appears very plain, we are now under the ſixth *Seal*; and that the Decurſe of Years will not expire, till there be a very conſiderable Acceſſion to the Church of both *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and that now God has begun to plead with *Babylon* ſince the Reformation, he will not quit the Plea, till he has brought her as low, as ever ſhe was high. But, from the whole of the Context, it ſeems there will ſome Time be conſumed ere all contain'd in it be brought to paſs: This we may the more eaſily allow, when we conſider, that in the *ſecond, third and fourth Seals*, ſeverals of Hundreds of Years are comprehended, tho' I ſhall not venture to tell how many, further than, I think, there are no fewer than a *Thouſand*; which we will find to be no liberal Allowance afterwards, when all Things are ſeriouſly weighed, as they caſt up in the Sequel of this Prophecy. Only remark from the Whole, That now we may ſecure ourſelves, *Antichriſt* ſhall never effectually make Head againſt the *Church of Chriſt*: There may be ſome Struggle, but ſtill the Church will have the Advantage, and her Enemies will fall under the Weight of her ſtrong Ones; when the Church will have Reaſon to ſay, *More are for her, than theſe who are againſt her.*

CHAP. VIII.

WE are told this Chapter opens to us a new Viſion; but then, at this Rate, we muſt have many Viſions in the Prophecy; for I ſee no more Reaſon for making this a new Viſion, than any of the former ſix Seals: And, if we allow the *ſealed Book* to make but one Viſion, I cannot underſtand why ſix Parts ſhould make one Viſion, and the ſeventh another, unleſs we have ſome Authority from the Text, which I have not found. I hope then, I may take this as a Part of the ſecond *Viſion*, otherwiſe each of the ſeven Seals muſt make a diſtinct *Viſion*, and then this ſhall be the eighth *Viſion*; ay, and the ſeven *Trumpets* ſhall increaſe the Number: And therefore, I take this as the Continuation of the former Viſion, and ſhall proceed to conſider it as the laſt Part thereof.

SEAL VII.

THIS Seal differs much from all the reſt, as will appear from theſe few Things, 1. The Account we have of the reſt, eſpecially five of them, is ſo very ſhort, that they are abſolved in the Space of two or three Verſes, whereas this employs four whole Chapters. 2. In all the other Seals we found only one Type or Emblem (except in the ſixth) but here we have ſeverals, as we ſhall find in the Progreſs. 3. All the Types in the former Seals were *earthly*, at leaſt what with little Labour might be brought to the Earth; whereas all here are celeſtial. 4. We had before, in three of the Seals, the Enemies of the Lord's People, and the Havock they were to make of them; but here we have a Prophecy of the Church's Victory over her Enemies, in ſeveral Steps. 5. All in the reſt are paſt and gone, except the ſixth Seal now current; and therefore we will be at the greater Loſs to find out the Senſe of this, and Eſcapes therein muſt be received with the more Candour and Diſcretion. 6. There is a great deal more Solemnity attends this

Seal, than the reſt; which is an Evidence ſomewhat more is contained in it, than can be found in all the other ſix. Upon the Whole, a great deal of Modeſty is to be exerciſed; and wherein we have not the Light of Scripture, Silence will be better than Preſumption.

In this Seal, which is very long, for it reaches to the Cloſe of *Chap.* xi. we have a great many Purpoſes; but, that we may take them up in Order, we ſhall conſider, 1. The Introduction, to *v.* 7. 2. The ſeveral Parts of the Seal, divided into ſeven Trumpets.

The Introduction has in it, beſide what is common to the other Seals, theſe Things; 1. Half an Hour's Silence, *v.* 1. 2. Seven Angels, with their ſeveral Trumpets, *v.* 2. 3. Another Angel, and his Work, to *v.* 6.

1 AND when he had opened the ſeventh Seal, there was Silence in Heaven about the Space of Half an Hour.

WE have nothing here to notice, but the *Half-Hour's Silence*, about which there is a great Conteſt, while ſome make it to ſignify the *Adverſity*, and others the *Proſperity* of the Church: But, to me, it ſeems to point at neither; for *John* had the whole of this Viſion in Heaven, *Chap.* iv. 1. and in the ſecond Part of the ſixth Seal, we found the whole Church, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, yea, and Angels, employed in the Praiſe of God and the Lamb, *Chap.* vii. 10. Now, as ſoon as this *ſeventh Seal* was opened, before any Type appeared, all theſe Saints and Angels kept profound Silence, expecting what was next to appear on this heavenly Theatre. And it would ſeem there was but a ſhort Interval, *about the Space of Half an Hour*, before any other Viſion was diſcovered, on purpoſe to prepare their Attention; ſo that here we need ſeek no Myſtery, which many weary themſelves to find. This, I think, is the moſt eaſy and natural Senſe of the Words.

2 And I ſaw the ſeven Angels which ſtood before God, and to them were given ſeven Trumpets.

It would appear, whatever theſe Angels were, they are here repreſented as the *Type* of all contained under this *Seal*; for, no ſooner is it opened, than they appear: And therefore I ſtrange that any ſhould ſay the *ſeven Trumpets* are not comprehended in the *ſeventh Seal*; for, if we allow not this, we ſhall not find any Thing in this *Seal*; but admitting this, we ſhall eaſily overcome one great Difficulty, that the ſeven Trumpets are not any Repetition of what was in the Seals, but that all of them conſtitute the laſt of theſe Seals. Here we are to conſider, 1. Their Perſons. 2. Their Poſture. 3. Their Inſtruments. All which may let us in to the Knowledge of this great Myſtery.

1. Their Perſons, *Seven Angels*, or *the ſeven Angels*, becauſe the Article is prefixed: However, I do not think we are thereby to mean *ſeven Arch-angels*, as ſome would without Ground perſwade us; for we know nothing certain about the Degrees and Orders of *Angels*, however poſitive ſome be. It is certain, the Article is prefixed promiſcuouſly among the *Greeks*, and not always with ſuch an Emphaſis as is contended for here; and yet we may well allow it a juſt Force in this Place, tho' it be not carried ſo far as determine the *Number* of *Arch-angels*. Here they ſeem to be a delegate Number, choſen from the whole heavenly Hoſt, on this Expedition, to ſatisfy *John*, and after him the whole Church; and they are called *Seven*, becauſe they are the very ſame we find mentioned in the following Part of the Viſion. But, how we can make them the ſame with the *ſeven Spirits*, I ſee not; yea, the very Reading of what is advanced about the *ſeven Spirits*, and theſe Angels, will be ſufficient to ſatisfy any they are not the ſame. As little are they to be credited, who make theſe *ſeven Angels* to be *ſeven Devils*; for the beſt of Angels may be (as we have heard before) Executioners of God's Juſtice.

2. Their Poſture, *They ſtood before God*: Which, I think, we are not ſo to underſtand, as if none elſe but they were admitted to this Honour; for this is the common Privilege of all Angels, who are ſaid to be *miniſtring Spirits*; and this I take to be the Import of the Phraſe here, for they are in a Poſture of Service and Attendance, and are here called on to wait for Orders. This ſeems to point out our Duty, that we ſhould be deliberate in all we do, and not venture raſhly on any Piece of Work, till we know our Maſter's Warrant.

3. Their Inſtruments, *And to them were given ſeven Trumpets.* We find the Uſe of *Trumpets* enjoined the *Iſraelites* by the ſpecial Command of God, and that on two ſpecial Occaſions, *Numb.* x. *If ye go to War againſt the Enemy that oppreſſeth you, then*

then ye ſhall blow the Trumpets:— v. 9, 10. *And in the Day of your Gladneſs, and in your ſolemn Days, and in the Beginning of your Months, ye ſhall blow with the Trumpets.* It is plain the one Time is a Day of Adverſity, and the other of Proſperity; and ſo we find Expoſitors differ here in the Application. Yet I make no Scruple to affirm, and hope to prove it, that this will be a Time of Gladneſs to the Church; tho' I refuſe not but the other may alſo take Place, for they will then ſucceſsfully engage their Enemies. They muſt have odd Thoughts of thoſe Trumpets, who look on each of them to be a Preſage of ſome new Miſery to the Church, and that the laſt brings in the Day of Judgment; for, at this Rate, the People of God ſhould never have one gladſom Hour, but out of one Trouble be immerſt in another, and have no Hopes of Peace or Satisfaction till they come to Heaven: Which is not poſſible to reconcile with the Threed of this Prophecy, and therefore we may ſafely reject it.

I own, it is a more allowable Fancy of a learned Author, who would have this allude to the *Jewiſh Jubilee*, Lev. xxv. 9. conſiſting of 49 Years; and by multiplying it by 7, the Sum amounts to 343, which they make the Period in which the Enemies of the Church are to fall. I own it were to be wiſht this Author had more Ground from the Text for this his ingenious Thought; yet, ſo far I cannot refuſe to go in with him, that it ſeems highly probable that the ſeven Trumpets are loud Alarms againſt *Babylon*, tho' I cannot ſubſcribe to the Periods he is pleaſed to condeſcend on, unleſs I ſaw fairer Evidence.

3 And another Angel came and ſtood at the Altar, having a Golden Cenſer, and there was given unto him much Incenſe, that he ſhould offer it with the Prayers of all Saints upon the Golden Altar, which was before the Throne.

4 And the Smoke of the Incenſe which *came* with the Prayers of the Saints, aſcended up before God out of the Angel's Hand.

5 And the Angel took the Cenſer, and filled it with Fire of the Altar, and caſt it into the Earth: And there were Voices, and Thundrings, and Lightnings, and an Earthquake.

This to be ſure is *another* Emblem. It is true, there appears to be an Interruption of the *firſt*, which begins again *v.* 6. and it ſeems alſo to be a very reaſonable Pauſe; for, while this Emblem was diſcovered, the other, which conſtitutes the greateſt Part of this Seal, was a-preparing. In this we have to notice, 1. The Perſon. 2. His Performance God-wards. 3. What he did towards the Earth: Which clears the Nature of the *Interceſſion* of Chriſt, and his Juſtice upon his Enemies.

I. We are to conſider the Perſon deſcribed to us, in theſe Particulars.

1. He is deſigned *Another Angel.* I am ready to believe this is an Emblem of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and is no *created Angel*, and as little to be underſtood of the *Holy Ghoſt*; tho' he inwardly *ſuggeſts* the Prayers of the Saints, yet is nowhere ſaid to offer them, this being the peculiar Province of the *Mediator*: And here he is preſented to us as *the great High Prieſt over the Houſe of God.* It was a ſpecial Inſtitution of God, under the Law, *Numb.* xvi. 40. *That no Stranger, which is not of the Seed of* Aaron, *come near to offer Incenſe before the Lord*: And we ſee, when *Uzziah* would venture on this, God ſmote him with a Leproſy, 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 16. So that this *Angel* was a Prieſt, and none elſe but the Angel of the Covenant.

2. He is deſcribed from the Place where he was, *He came and ſtood at the Altar.* This was not the *Altar of Burnt-offering*, for that ſtood without the Temple; but the *Altar of Incenſe*, which ſtood within, before the Mercy-Seat; and is here called the *Golden Altar*, becauſe it was covered with Gold, as we read, *Exod.* xxx. 1, &c. This *Angel* then had the moſt immediate Acceſs unto the *Throne* of God. That it is ſaid he *came*, does ſignify the Diligence and Expedition of Chriſt in this Work.

3. There is his Inſtrument, which confirms the former Thought, *Having a Golden Cenſer*, the proper Inſtrument for thoſe that burnt *Incenſe* before the Lord: And it is here ſaid to be of *Gold*, to diſtinguiſh it from other Cenſers, which were made of Braſs; for we read not of other Metal uſed for that Purpoſe till *Solomon*'s Time, when it is ſaid, 1 *Kings* vii. 50. *He made Cenſers of pure Gold.* This ſhews he was a moſt excellent Prieſt.

4. He is deſcribed from his Furniture, *And there was given unto him much Incenſe.* This, under the Law, was a Compoſition of a great many moſt fragrant and aromatick Simples, and was expreſly ordered to be made ſo and ſo; but here, this Incenſe is

his own Merit and All-ſufficient Grace, whereby he both helps the Believer to what he is called to, and alſo by his Merit makes what they do acceptable to the Father. To this the Apoſtle alludes, when he ſays, *Eph.* v. 2. *He* (i. e. *Chriſt*) *offered up himſelf a Sacrifice of a ſweet-ſmelling Savour unto God for us.* The only Difficulty here is, it is ſaid, *This Incenſe was given unto him*: And hence ſome conclude, we cannot mean this of Chriſt, who had not his Merit from any. But others intirely wave the Conſideration of this Objection, which is indeed not very weighty, and may be removed ſeveral Ways. 1. This Expreſſion, *was given*, may reſpect the Prieſtly Office; and ſo the Senſe of it is, *It was given to him to be a Prieſt.* Beſides, a very moderate tranſpoſing of the Words, without altering the Conſtruction, will make this the infallible Senſe of them, *viz. There was given to him that he might offer, or add, much Incenſe with, or to, the Prayers of the Saints,* i. e. God made him a Prieſt for this very End. 2. This may be a ſimple Alluſion to the Method of the High Prieſts Behaviour, under the Law, to whom the Keeper of the Incenſe gave daily what was to be offered: And then there will be no Difficulty at all; for, in explaining Alluſions, there is no need of ſticking cloſly to every Part of the Figure. 3. It is expreſly ſaid, that theſe Graces in Chriſt, figured by the odoriferous Incenſe, were given unto Chriſt, *Pſal.* xlv. 7. *God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the Oil of Gladneſs above thy Fellows.* And again, *He received not the Spirit in Meaſure.* And finally, *Col.* i. 19. *It pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all Fulneſs dwell.*

II. There is what he did, in Behalf of his People, towards God; and the Effect thereof.

1. What he did in Favours of his Saints, *He offered the Incenſe with the Prayers of all Saints, upon the Golden Altar before the Throne*: Or, as it will read, and be nearer the Original, *He added the Incenſe to the Prayers,* &c. So that all the *Efficacy* of the Saints Prayers flows from the *Merits* of Chriſt; they can never otherwiſe reach the Throne of Grace, *Eph.* i. 6. *To the Praiſe of the Glory of his Grace, he had made us accepted in the Beloved*: And ſo it is ſaid to them, *Ye are an holy Prieſthood, to offer ſpiritual Sacrifices acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt.* That here it is added, *This Altar was before the Throne,* or in the Sight of the Throne, will make no Difficulty tho' it be true. The Altar of Incenſe was not in Sight of the Mercy-ſeat, for the Vail did paſs betwixt them; for that was only while there were typical Prieſts, as *Aaron* and his Sons were: But when Chriſt the *true Prieſt* came, there was no Vail or Covering betwixt him and the Mercy-ſeat; And ſo this is a Commendation of the Prieſtly Office of Chriſt.

2. The Effect of this Oblation, *v.* 4. The Prayers of the Saints having received the Wings of Chriſt's Merit, *They aſcended up before the Lord, out of the Angel's Hand,* i. e. God was pleaſed with them, and graciouſly anſwered all their Supplications: This is the Scripture-ſenſe of this figurative Expreſſion, as we ſee anent *Cornelius,* Acts x. 4. *Thy Prayers and thine Alms are come up for a Memorial before God*: Which afterwards we have in plainer Terms, *v.* 31. *Cornelius, thy Prayer is heard.* Theſe Prayers ſeem to be much a-kin to theſe under the fifth Seal.

III. There is what he did to the Earth, or againſt his own and his Peoples Enemies, together with the Effects, *v.* 5.

1. What he did to the Earth, *The Angel took the Cenſer, and filled it with Fire of the Altar, and caſt it into the Earth.* As to Queſtions moved about theſe Words, *viz.* What Altar he took the Fire from? and what Cenſer he put it in? I humbly think, we may be at little Trouble about them. I think, we allowing the Fire to come from any of the Altars, whether that of *Burnt-offering,* which, by the Command of God, was always to be burning; or from the *Altar of Incenſe,* which never had Fire, but while the Incenſe was burnt thereon; it will anſwer the whole Demand. We have an Expreſſion not much different from this, in *Ezekiel,* Chap. x. 2. *Go in between the Wheels, even under the Cherub, and fill thine Hand with Coals of Fire from between the Cherubims, and ſcatter them over the City.* This may give ſome Light to it, and direct to find out the true Meaning.

But here we have to conſider a Gloſs of the Words offered by a great many, whoſe Works praiſe them in the Churches, and make all this to be an Emblem of Chriſt's communicating *Grace* to his *Church,* and *Gifts* unto his *Servants* of the Miniſtry; they have alſo the Authority of ſeverals of the Ancients to ſupport them, particularly *Auguſtine,* on the Place, ſays, *Aſcendit oratio, deſcendit commiſeratio*: This they fortify by ſome very plauſible Reaſons, as, 1. This is the Return made to the Saints Prayers; and to be ſure, they would pray for Grace to their Souls, and ſpiritual Gifts to their Miniſters. 2. Theſe are the uſual Effects of Fire from the Altar, as the Prophet witneſſeth, *Iſa.* vi. 6, 7. *Then flew one of the Seraphims unto me, having a live Coal in his Hand,* which

which he had taken with the Tongs from off the Altar, and he laid it upon my Mouth, and ſaid, Lo, this hath touched thy Lips, and thine Iniquity is taken away, and thy Sin purged. 3. The Word of God is compared in Scripture to Fire, *Jer.* xxiii. 29. *Is not my Word like as a Fire?* 4. The Holy Ghoſt in his Operations is compared to Fire, *Mat.* iii. 11. *He ſhall baptize you with the Holy Ghoſt, and with Fire.* All theſe are very plauſible, yet there is more needful to the finding out the Senſe of an obſcure Text, than the advancing of others agreeing in the Phraſe; for they muſt alſo agree as to the Scope and Context, elſe they cannot give Light to one another, I ſhall therefore, 1. Examine the Grounds of this popular Opinion. And, 2. Endeavour to eſtabliſh another. There ſeems to be the more Reaſon for this, becauſe the clearing of this Difficulty will make this Text a Key to all the *ſeven Trumpets* following.

We would view the advanced Grounds for the former Meaning of the Words: Where, 1. They ſay, This is a direct Return to the Prayers of the Saints; which I am ready to yield: But then, What were their Prayers? To be ſure we muſt not form their Prayers for them: And to ſay they prayed for Grace and Gifts, we may allow this to have been the Bulk of all their Supplications. But it would be conſidered, the main Scope of this Prophecy is to repreſent the Church in her wreſtling State, and in her Deliverance therefrom, and ſo her Supplications are to be meaſured by theſe; and ſo the Prayers this anſwers, are theſe we had *Chap.* vi. 10. *They cried with a loud Voice, ſaying, How long,* &c. To which then they received a Return, but all in Promiſe, *v.* 11. *It was ſaid unto them, They ſhould reſt for a little Seaſon,* &c. and ſo their Enemies were ſuffered to go on againſt the Church till the *ſixth Seal,* when they received a partial Anſwer, as we have ſeen: Yet, under that, the Enemies of the Church were more frighted than deſtroyed; and the Church had more Advantage by her Increaſe, than Proſperity and Peace, for that they were to enjoy under the ſeventh Seal. 2. Their next Ground is taken from the Words of the Prophet *Iſaiah,* Iſa. vi. 6. But there we find a pointed Return to the Prophet's Prayer, *v.* 5. *Wo's me, for I am undone, becauſe I am a Man of unclean Lips:* But we have nothing like this here. Beſides, there it is ſaid, the *Seraph* gently *touched his Lips;* but here the *Angel* did violently *caſt the Fire.* Now, to *caſt Fire,* in Scripture, ſignifies Judgments; as was plain from the Words of *Ezekiel,* Ezek. x. 2. for all underſtand that of terrible Judgments. As to the *third* and *fourth* Grounds, That the Word and Operations of the Spirit are ſometimes compared to Fire, becauſe of their purifying Nature, is a great Truth: But thence it will not follow that all Fire muſt repreſent them, eſpecially a deſtroying Fire, as what is in the Trumpets ſeems plainly to be pointed at.

It would appear then, we are to underſtand this of an ireful Diſpenſation: But even in this, there is nothing of that Agreement could be wiſhed; for many tell us, It is Wrath againſt the Church, and that *Antichriſt* was to riſe under the Trumpets, and ſo all of them ſpeak bitter Things againſt the Saints. To this I anſwer, 1. We ſhewed *Antichriſt* roſe under the ſecond, third and fourth Seals, and ſo is not to take his Birth under the ſeventh. 2. I ſee not how it is poſſible to connect the Parts of this Prophecy with this Senſe, to ſay Chriſt did offer up the Prayers of the Saints, and they were heard; and yet all the Return be Vengeance poured out upon the Church, without any Encouragement, as was given under the *fifth Seal,* or ſo much as a Reaſon why God would treat them ſo, which we obſerve was ſtill given in the *Epiſtles* to particular Churches: Now, can we in Reaſon think God will treat the *Univerſal Church* after harder Meaſures than he did *Particular Churches*? Nay, we may not allow ourſelves to think ſo: And conſequently the Interpretation of this Viſion is to the Enemies of *Zion.*

This is then what I take to be the Senſe of it; and we have a Paſſage in *Jeremiah* to this Purpoſe, againſt literal *Babylon,* Jer. li. 11. *Make bright the Arrows, gather the Shields: The Lord hath raiſed up the Spirit of the King of the* Medes; *for his Device is againſt* Babylon *to deſtroy it, becauſe it is the Vengeance of the Lord, the Vengeance of his Temple.* To clear this Meaning a little, we ſhall notice theſe Things in the Words.

(1.) The Object, *The Earth.* Tho' this Word be intelligible enough in its common Uſe, yet it is not agreed on all Hands what is the prophetical Senſe of it: For ſome by it underſtand the *Militant Church;* others the *Viſible;* and a great many think it reſpects the *Wicked,* or ſuch as are eſtranged from God, and have no Intereſt in Chriſt: Which I take to be the Meaning of it here; and that becauſe no where, eſpecially in this Prophecy, do I find Mention made of the *Earth,* but in Oppoſition to the *Saints* or People of God; ſo, *Chap.* 14. 3. the *Redeemed* is expreſly diſtinguiſhed from the *Earth;* and it is not ſuppoſible we are to underſtand nothing by the *Earth,* but theſe who were *ſealed* and *clothed with white Robes* above. We ſhall not inſiſt on this

further, than it will be found as we go along, that always where *Earth* is not taken for the habitable World, it ſtill ſignifies the reprobate Part of Mankind, unleſs when it is oppoſed to the Sea.

(2.) The Act, *He caſt it*; which ſtill ſignifies Force and Violence, and ſo is an Evidence of great Diſpleaſure, as we find it expreſſed, *Chap.* xviii. 21. where *the Angel lifted up a great Stone like a Milſtone, and did caſt it into the Sea, ſaying, Thus with Violence ſhall* Babylon *be deſtroyed.* And juſt ſo the caſting of Fire into the Earth, is to kindle a Flame in it, which will not be extinguiſhed but with their utter Deſtruction and Ruin, tho' it may take ſome Time; for we find the Trumpets are Seven in Number, and the Vials are as many.

(3.) The Place whence this Fire is taken, *From off the Altar.* As the *Sacrifice* did repreſent Jeſus Chriſt, the true Propitiation; ſo the Fire does repreſent the *Wrath of God*, which was inflicted upon Chriſt for the *Elect World*, and will be poured out on the Chriſtleſs Part of Mankind, who having no Intereſt in Chriſt, muſt feel the heavy Laſhes of God's Diſpleaſure. And that here *Fire* is ſaid to be taken from the *Altar*, tells us plainly the Ground of God's Controverſy with the World, is the Deſpiſing and Rejecting an offered Chriſt in the Goſpel.

2. The Effects, *There were Voices, and Thundrings, and Lightnings, and an Earthquake.* I ſee not how this can be applied any other Way, than to repreſent the Auguſt Majeſty of God, in the Exerciſe of his *Juſtice*, and to aſſure us the Effects of it are both terrible and irreſiſtible: To this Purpoſe we have a very notable Paſſage by the Prophet, *Iſa.* xxx. 30. *The Lord ſhall cauſe his glorious Voice to be heard, and ſhall ſhew the Lighting-down of his Arm, with the Indignation of his Anger, and with the Flame of a devouring Fire, with Scattering, and Tempeſt, and Hail-ſtones.* This cannot be meant of any Thing but the Diſplays of *God's Juſtice*; and I think I might ſafely challenge any to adduce one plain Scripture, to prove that the Diſtribution of ſaving Grace is delivered in the ſame Terms: As for others, like which we have heard, we may be eaſy about them. It appears then, it would be but loſt Labour to make a particular Enquiry into each of theſe four, eſpecially that we have met with them before, the firſt three, *Chap.* iv. 5. the laſt, *Chap.* vi. 12. It appears ſufficient for us to obſerve, this Judgment is the ſame was forcibly reſtrained by the four Angels, *Chap.* vii. 1. for the Work of Sealing was not over; and theſe Angels were allowed to looſe the Reins of all theſe Confuſions after the Elect were gathered in, which are nothing elſe than theſe were feared, *Chap.* vi. 17. with this Odds, they might be ready to believe it to be the laſt and general Day of Retribution, whereas in Truth it will only be the particular Day of *Babylon*'s Judgment. And further, while the Lord is pleaſed thus to call off his powerful Reſtrainers, he does not, we ſee, let looſe all his Wrath at once, but by other ſeven Angels ſo manages theſe Judgments, that they may not affright and ſurprize his own People, nor yet at once to carry off his Enemies, for many wiſe and cogent Reaſons. But this brings us again to reſume the Hiſtory of the ſeven Angels we had before mentioned, *v.* 2.

6 And the ſeven Angels which had the ſeven Trumpets, prepared themſelves to ſound.

All the Difficulty in this Verſe is, in my Opinion, rather brought to it, than found in it; and therefore I ſhall paſs it, with a few Remarks may be further introductory to the ſubſequent ſeven Trumpets.

1. I cannot be brought to believe, from all advanced, there is any Myſtery in the *Soundings* of theſe Angels, and as little in their *Trumpets*, unleſs we take them to be ſo many *Alarms* given to *Antichriſt*. I own indeed, ſome tell us, If we ſtrip this ſeventh Seal of *the Half-hour's Silence*, and the *Soundings of the Seven Trumpets*, we make it to have leſs Solemnity than any of the other ſix: Yet it ſeems plain, the *Soundings* here can ſignify no more than the *Going out of the Horſes*; And for what follows, we will find the Types every whit as remarkable.

2. If theſe Angels ſignify any Thing more than to acquaint *John* what was to fall out, they muſt repreſent the Executioners of God's Will upon his Enemies: And tho' here in the Viſion the *Alarms* were very obſervable to the Prophet, yet I cannot think the Conſequents will be ſo obvious to the World, nay, nor to the Church; but will be as imperceptible to our Eyes, as the Influence of the *Cherubim* in *Ezekiel*'s Viſion, *Ezek.* x. was in the Accompliſhment; or as that of the *Angels* and *Chariots* in the Prophet *Zechariah*'s Viſion, *Zech.* ii. &c. neither of which are yet agreed on.

3. In

3. In regard all these seven Angels appeared to *John* at once, and all of them prepared together for their Work, I cannot think betwixt the Sounds of every *Trumpet* we are to allow the Space of 245 Years, much less the Number of 260 Years, as Expositors diversly affect; else, as in the *Seals*, one of them had only appeared at once, and the Emblem evanished before he had a second: But here the several Angels continue with the Trumpets prepared, which plainly seems to say, they were not to be long in succeding one another; Tho', I own, I have found no Ground from the Text to fix either a shorter or longer Time: Nay, further, I own as all the Seals did appear at once, so does all the Angels; and therefore the more Modesty the better, while we have nothing to direct us, especially that all these Transactions are probably to come.

4. I can as little allow all the Trumpets Significations to take Place at once. Some contend and reason from the Seals, that they were all current at the same Time. I am ready to believe, and we may have more Ground for it afterwards, that the Truth of the Types will be truly successive to one another, at least as to their first Commencement, and the same may be observed in the Seals; but, having once begun, I doubt not but the *second* will overtake the *first*, the *third* the *second*, &c. and consequently, before the first be finished, the second may be begun, *&c.* And what confirms me in this, is an Expression, *Chap.* x. 7. *In the Days of the Voice of the seventh Angel, the Mystery of God shall be finished.* Which, in my Judgment, says, at least, that the other *six* should be begun before the *seventh*, yea and a good while over, else I see not how it might not have been as well said, In the Days of the first, if they should begin all at once. And, to say that four or six should be cotemporary, without a Reason, may be justly neglected; for, why may they not succeed one another from first to last, as well as the fifth to succeed four, or the seventh six?

5. I take these Trumpets to be precisely Seven, and a definite Number; so that neither more or less is to be meant thereby: And indeed, if we allow it to be taken indefinitely, it may be taken for *Two*, or Two thousand, and thereby render the whole Prophecy uncertain; and then, how can we answer for the particular Enumeration of them we find afterwards? And when *four* are over, 'tis said, that *three* are to come; and when five are over, it is said, that two are to come, *&c.* Besides, we find the seventh mentioned with a Witness, *Chap.* x. 7. and therefore, as such, we view them.

TRUMPET I.

TO the Consideration of the *Trumpets*, I shortly premise these few Things;

1. Tho' I am convinced from the Scope of this Prophecy, that these *seven Trumpets* prognosticate much Evil to the Enemies of the Church; yet I would not have it so understood, as if either the Saints should feel no Disquiet at all from them, or that these Judgments should prove utterly destructive of their Enemies: For it is not conceivable, how such great and notable Convulsions should be in the World, and no Uneasiness happen to the Share of the Church, which at this Time will be spread both broad and wide. However it would appear, this Trouble the Church will then feel, shall be very far short of what she met with, under the *second*, *third* and *fourth Seals*.

2. Tho' these Judgments will be very anoying to Persecutors, it will not make a full End of them, which seems to be reserved for the *Vials*. 'Tis true, some think the *Trumpets* and the *Vials* cotemporary, yea, and to signify the same Things under different Emblems. I own, there is a great Affinity betwixt them, and there is also a notable Difference, which we shall notice when we come to the Vials: But there is this cogent Reason perswading they are not the same, That we have no Explication or particular Illustration of the Trumpets, as we have of the Vials; and, if they were the same in Signification, one Sett of Figures, with an Illustration, would have done the Matter, as we find in the Seals, for we never find any Passage of the Scripture useless: Besides, the Account of the Vials is every Whit as short and obscure, as that of the Trumpets is; which, together with the notable Difference in the Text, shews they are not the same, either in Emblem or Signification; tho', it seems very probable, that these Trumpets will make Way for these Vials.

3. Most of the Judgments that followed the Sound of the Trumpets, have a manifest Allusion to several of these Plagues God inflicted upon *Egypt*, when he was preparing his Peoples Way out of that Bondage; which Deliverance will never meet with a full and perfect Exposition, till that Time God deliver his whole Church, with the utter Overthrow of all the Enemies thereof; and this we cannot expect, till the last of these

Plagues repreſented by the Trumpets and the Vials. It is alſo to be obſerved here, the *Spirit of God* does not obſerve the ſame Order of the Plagues of *Egypt*, and the Plagues on *Babylon*; but chooſes them as he ſees meet, and will beſt correſpond to the Truth which is to follow.

7 The firſt Angel ſounded, and there followed Hail, and Fire mingled with Blood, and they were caſt upon the Earth: And the third Part of the Trees was burnt up, and all green Graſs was burnt up.

Beſides the Sounding of the Trumpet, of which we have ſpoke, we have here to conſider, 1. The Cauſe, 2. The Effect, both in Types.

I. The Type of the *Cauſe*; where we may notice its Harmony with the *ſeventh Plague* upon *Egypt*, Exod. ix. 24, 25. *The Lord ſent Thunder, and Hail, and the Fire ran along upon the Ground: So there was Hail, and Fire mingled with the Hail, very grievous.* We conſider, 1. The Judgment. 2. The Object thereof.

1. The Judgment, which was very heavy upon the *Egyptians*, literally, and is an Emblem of a no eaſy Stroke, figuratively; which, I think, is to be the Way of underſtanding it here. 1. It is called *Hail*: We have the ſame Word pointing out other Judgments, by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. xxxii. 19. *It ſhall hail, coming down on the Foreſt.* We have a Threatning in the ſame Terms againſt the Children of *Ephraim*, Iſa. xxviii. 2. *Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and ſtrong One, which, as a Tempeſt of Hail, ſhall caſt down to the Earth.* Which all underſtand of *Salamanezer*. And when God threatens falſe Prophets, he does it after the ſame Manner, *Ezek.* xiii. 13. *There ſhall be an overflowing Shower in mine Anger, and great Hail-ſtones in my Fury.* This Emblem will caſt up ſeveral Things to us, concerning the general Nature of this Plague; as its Suddenneſs, its Noiſe, and laſtly, that it will not laſt long. 2. It has added to it *Fire*: Of this the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks in the Place before quoted, *Iſa.* xxx. 30. only it is added here, there was *Fire mingled with Blood*; which ſome underſtand of a bloody coloured Fire. Others tell us, Wherever there is Hail and Lightning together, the Fire makes many of the Hail-ſtones of a bloody Colour, and is always a Sign of a moſt terrible Storm; which, in its Nature, is as amazing and frightful, as it is hurtful and deſtructive.

2. The Object of this Plague, *the Earth*, which we explained above; nor can more be added here, ſave that if there be a Diſtinction, as ſome contend, and not without Reaſon, betwixt the *Sea* and the *Earth*, that then, by *Earth*, we are to mean the Eaſtern Part of the World, now called *Aſia*, in Oppoſition to both *Europe* and *Africa*, which have not ſuch a Continent betwixt them, as *Aſia* alone; and they make the ſame Phraſes to be equivalent, *the Earth* and *the Sea*, and *the Eaſt* and *the Weſt*. If this ſhould hold, (but we will hear more of this afterwards) then the Meaning here is, This firſt Plague will light upon *Aſia*, that great Continent: Nor is the Conjecture unplauſible; for, as the Chriſtian Religion had its Birth there, ſo Enmity againſt the ſame drew its firſt Breath in that Region: Yet, it is plain from what is paſt, we cannot allow this *Vial* to be directed againſt the *Jews*, who were many Ages diſpoſſeſt of that Country before this Seal. And, as to that other common Opinion, That it is a Perſecution againſt the Church, 'tis every Whit as unjuſtifiable; for if according to the Uſe of the Phraſe mentioning this Judgment, it is always either the Vengeance of God upon his open Enemies, or his juſt Wrath upon a backſliden People, as we have ſeen Inſtances of. I cannot learn how they can bring in Perſecution, unleſs they before eſtabliſh a Defection, which indeed ſome ſuppoſe, but offer no Proof: Nor is it poſſible any can be brought to this Purpoſe, after we have eſtabliſhed the Senſe of the preceeding Chapter, as above; elſe we muſt turn the Whole of this Prophecy into the utmoſt Confuſion, and ſuppoſe the Church to have more Enemies than what the three Seals, and all their Deſcendents, can produce: Which alſo rather increaſeth, than alleviates the Difficulty; becauſe then the *Revelation* will not be found to contain a compleat *Summary* of all the *Divine Diſpenſations*, as we found fairly promiſed oftner than once in the preceeding Part thereof. Again, it is ſaid, this *Hail*, &c. *was caſt upon the Earth*, this ſhews the Deſignation thereof; God in this is not ſhooting at Rovers, but he directly intends to hit the Mark: It is then a very artful Execution we have here deſcribed. And further, it is ſaid, *He caſt it*; ſhewing the Violence and Force of this Judgment: Had he let it fall, it might have done Execution enough; but when it is caſt, it muſt do more; for a light Thing out of a ſtrong Hand, eſpecially when thrown with Force, will do a great deal more Execution, than what is much more heavy in itſelf, when left to its Weight and Decadency.

II. There

III. There is the Effect of this Cauſe, which is *Burning*; a very proper Fruit of Fire, but not ſo proper of Hail. It muſt be owned, there is great Difficulty in this; nor have any of the Learned been at Pains to ſcann this, that we might be let in but to any tolerable Conjecture about it. I apprehend, we cannot alter the Senſe of the Word *burnt*, or conſumed, which properly ſignifies to make uſeleſs; ſo that this Plague, tho' it will not be univerſal, it will be very deſtructive where it hits. Some think, the Meaning is taken from the Reſemblance, that the Hail would make theſe Things as if they were burnt, *i. e.* with reſpect to Trees, repel their Sap, beat off their Leaves, and leave them as naked, as if a Flame had encompaſſed them: And as for the Graſs, that it made it like Hay or red Graſs. However, I paſs this, and ſhall conſider, 1. Upon what this Deſtruction fell. 2. How much thereof was conſumed or made uſeleſs.

1. We have two Sorts of Things on the Earth felt the Effects of this Storm of the Divine Diſpleaſure; 1. Trees. 2. Green Graſs. Some would have the firſt to be an Emblem of their durable Pleaſures, for the Age of a Tree is great; And by Graſs, their other more common, but ſhort-liv'd Satisfactions. But I cannot find Scripture uſe theſe Words in this Senſe; and it will be ſureſt to keep by the Meaning we meet with thereof in the Word of God. In Scripture then, we are to underſtand by *Trees*, great Men, and proud Men, *Iſa.* ii. 12, 13. *The Day of the Lord ſhall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, upon all the Cedars of* Lebanon, *and upon all the Oaks of* Baſhan. And, by a clear Conſequence, the Graſs muſt ſignify the Populace, as the Prophet ſays, *Iſa.* xl. 7. *Surely the People is Graſs.* This is a Senſe alſo that the firſt Vial ſeems to ſmile on, *Rev.* xvi. 2. *There fell a noiſom and grievous Sore upon the Men which had the Mark of the Beaſt, and upon them which worſhipped his Image.* Where, by theſe who had the *Mark*, may be meant Perſons of Diſtinction; and by theſe that worſhipped, *&c.* may be meant the whole Herd. And, if by this Image of the Beaſt be meant *Mahomet*, the Senſe will be plain, but not ſatisfying, till we have conſidered the thirteenth *Chapter*.

2. We have the Portion of theſe were conſumed, *The third Part of the Trees*: If we may not take this literally, to be ſure we may take it for the leaſt Part, which we may not refuſe to do, if we pay a juſt Regard to the Word of God. Now, the Plague is called a *Burning* in the Text, in the Vial it is called *a noiſom and grievous Sore*, which well may be compared to a Burning. But, whether we ſhould take this for a fretful Uneaſineſs in their Mind, or any peſtilencial Diſtemper on their Body, I ſhall not be raſh to determine, but it may well ſuit with the Words. As for the *green Graſs*, it is not ſaid a third part of it was burnt, but that all *green Graſs*, that is, all Sorts of it, as there are a great many different Sizes amongſt the Vulgar; and this tells us, whatever the Calamity be, it will be *heavy* upon the *great Men*, but more ſo upon the *Populace* or the inferior Part.

As for the Application of this, I own it to be moſt uncertain; yet, as far as I can conjecture, it may plainly point at the Peſtilence. And, from all the Accounts of it, it will be one of the heavieſt, and moſt deſtructive, that has been known; but, whether only *Aſia*, or both it and *Europe* will meet with it, only Time can reſolve: But ſeveral Things in the Peſt do well agree to this Judgment; As, 1. Hail comes immediately from Heaven; ſo the Peſt. 2. It is very ſudden, like Hail. 3. It burns up with Pain, and is noiſom. 4. It rages moſt among the meaner Sort. 5. The Plague is what marches from Place to Place, as Hail does, and continues not long in one Corner, but commonly does Miſchief enough before it goes. A Blunder in theſe Things may be eaſily committed; but then, it ſhould be as eaſily pardoned, eſpecially if one confine himſelf to a modeſt Scripture-Enquiry: And, if a little Freedom be not allowed our Thoughts, we muſt deſpair of finding Truth; and it would appear, the *Spirit of God* is not againſt *Freedom* to ſerious Minds, eſpecially in this Portion of holy Writ.

TRUMPET II.

8 And the ſecond Angel ſounded, and as it were a great Mountain burning with Fire was caſt into the Sea, and the third Part of the Sea became Blood:

9 And the third Part of the Creatures which were in the Sea, and had Life, died; and the third Part of the Ships were deſtroyed.

THIS *Trumpet* has alſo an Alluſion to one of the Plagues of *Egypt*, the firſt in Order, *Exod.* vii. 19. &c. only there, inſtead of this burning Mountain, we find only the Stretching out of *Moſes*'s Rod: Nor does the Effects anſwer in all Things; here it is the *Sea*, there it is called the *Rivers*, *Ponds* and *Pools*, yea, and all other *gathered Water*, even in Veſſels within Doors. The Deſtruction alſo differs; for in the Plague of *Egypt* only the *Fiſhes* died, but here the Ships were deſtroyed; therefore it can only be a moſt general Alluſion this Trumpet can have to that Plague in *Egypt*. There is ſtill here a greater Harmony betwixt this Trumpet and the ſecond *Vial*, Rev. xvi. 3. only, in it we have no Emblem of the Plague, but Mention of the Effects, which, tho' they differ in many Things, yet agree in not a few: However, we wave the Conſideration of the *Vial*, and apply ourſelves cloſs to the *Trumpet*; where, as in the *firſt*, we have, 1. The Type of the Judgment. 2. The Effects.

I. The Type of the Judgment; where we have, 1. The Thing. 2. The Object.

1. We have the Thing in this Judgment, *As it were a great Mountain burning with Fire was caſt into the Sea.* We had Occaſion before to give the prophetical Senſe of *Mountain*, Chap. vi. 14. which I ſee not how we can alter; only here we have two Additions, 1. It is called a *great Mountain*, which, I think, ſhould ſignify ſome notable *Dynaſty* or Power, more eminent than many others about it; and, to be ſure, we muſt mean ſomething more than a mere Protuberance of the Earth, ſuch as in ordinary Diſcourſe we call a *Mountain*, becauſe it is here ſaid, *As it were*; which Expreſſion, tho' it ſometimes may note a Reality, yet we may not ſay it does always ſo: 'Tis true, the Circumſtances of the Place may be of Uſe to guide us in this Matter. And here, all concur to direct us to a *figurative* Meaning; for it will not be poſſible to make Senſe of this *literally*. The Odds will not be great, whether we take the Word here, for an *Empire*, or the *capital City* of one; for theſe in Scripture commonly ſignify the ſame Thing, as the *Empire* of *Chaldea*, and the *City of* Babylon, are equivalent Terms, becauſe the Kings who command the Empire commonly reſide in theſe Cities. 2. It is deſigned a *burning* Mountain. Some have a great Inclination to take this *paſſively*, as if this *Mountain* was conſuming, and by the Flame of itſelf ſhould be more uneaſy to others. I refuſe not but ſometimes we read of a *burnt Mountain* in Scripture, but there is a great Odds betwixt the Expreſſions; for here this *Mountain* had the Spark in itſelf, which did ſo much Miſchief to others: But when it is taken in a *paſſive* Senſe, we ſee a great Difference, *Iſa.* li. 25. *Behold, I am againſt thee, O deſtroying Mountain, ſaith the Lord, which deſtroyeſt all the Earth: And I will ſtretch out my Hand upon thee, and will roll thee down from the Rocks, and will make thee a burnt Mountain.* Where we have two Periods of this Mountain, one when it was a deſtroying Mountain, and was fatal to Powers about the ſame; and then it might be deſigned a *burning Mountain*: Another, when God contended therewith, and brought it down, when it was indeed a *burnt Mountain*; and ſo *Jeremiah*'s Senſe of a deſtroying Mountain, is the ſame with the burning Mountain here.

2. The Object, this Mountain *was caſt into the Sea*: As the firſt lighted on the Earth, this upon the Sea. I own, from Scripture, we ſhall ſee the Earth and the Sea to be the ſame Thing: So ſays *Daniel*, Chap. vii. 3. *Four great Beaſts came out of the Sea, diverſe one from another.* This he turns over again in the ſame Chapter, *v.* 17. *Theſe great Beaſts are four Kings which ſhall riſe out of the Earth.* Where, it is plain, the ſame Thing is meant by the Sea and the Earth; which Opinion a great many incline to follow, and juſtify the Change of Expreſſion, by telling all was in perfect *Quiet* and profound Peace when the firſt *Trumpet* ſounded; but by the *Effects* of it, all was put in Commotion like the *raging Sea*. Yet one might be tempted, after they conſider the ſeveral Objects of this Trumpet, to think, that the *Earth* muſt differ from the *Sea*, and both from the *Rivers* and *Fountains of Waters*, on which the third Plague fell, and all of them from the *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Stars*, on which the fourth fell; tho', in the Judgment of all, the *Earth*, in its more general Acceptation, may comprehend them all: So that here, as was ſaid before, by *Sea*, we may mean the Weſtern Part of the World, called, for Diſtinction's Sake, *Europe*, becauſe it does not conſiſt of ſuch a Continent as *Aſia*, and is more ſcattered and ſeparated in its Parts by Seas, Gulphs, *&c.* But I can ſee no Ground in this from the Context, or other Scriptures, to underſtand this of *Perſecution* againſt the Church, and far leſs of the Corrupting of the Worſhip of God, which, ſo far as I know, is never repreſented by the *Sea*. This is alſo ſaid to be *caſt into the Sea*; the ſame Word as in the preceeding Verſe, and ſo muſt have the ſame Senſe.

II. There are the Effects, in *v.* 8, 9. where we ſhall conſider, 1. Who ſuffered. 2. How far they ſuffered.

1. We

1. We have to view who ſuffered, and this in three; 1. More generally, the *Sea*, it became Blood; in the ſecond Vial it *became as the Blood of a dead Man*: Which repreſents to us its Unfitneſs for ſubſiſting theſe who live in it; and ſo this tells us, they will loſe Pleaſure and Satisfaction in their Dwellings: Yea, it ſeems to ſay there will be great Blood-ſhed and Slaughter in that Part of the World; their Condition will be much like what the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſays, *Chap.* ix. 5. *Every Battle of the Warrior will be with confuſed Noiſe, and Garments rolled in Blood.* 2. *The Creatures which were in the Sea, and had Life, died*: This is with Alluſion to the Plague of *Egypt*, before quoted, where it is ſaid, *The Fiſh died, and ſtunk.* But, it would appear, God's Controverſy is more with Men than Fiſhes: And if by Sea we are to underſtand *Europe*, then, by theſe who live in it, we are to mean the Inhabitants, eſpecially ſuch as are Enemies to the People of God. 3. Ships were deſtroyed: It is diſputed, what we are to mean by *Ships*? I ſhall paſs the Examination of many Thoughts about them, and underſtand ſmaller Societies, that in their Members are ambulatory, and remove from one Place to another; for I ſee not how *Iſlands* can be meant thereby: Nor will it be ſo pat to underſtand maritime Cities, or mart Ports, tho' ſo many of their Inhabitants have the Throng of their Buſineſs in the Sea; for, ſeeing Sea is not properly to be taken, as little can we, by *Ships*, mean any Thing ſo near *allied* to the *Sea*.

2. We have next how far each of theſe three ſuffered, *A third Part*; ſo that, tho' the Calamity will be great, it will not be utterly exterminating. It was a greater Part *Zechariah* foretells the Deſtruction of, *Zech.* xiii. 8. *A third Part ſhall be left therein*, for then twice as many were to be deſtroyed; but here only a *third Part* are to be ſlain, and ſo twice ſo many were to be reſerved. This is not like the *ſecond Vial*, where it is ſaid, *Rev.* xvi. 3. *Every living Soul died in the Sea.* But this is not to be ſo bloody.

The Application of this will not be more eaſy than of the former; only it would appear, the Strength of the Judgment in the firſt Trumpet will be ſpent ere this begin; but *Aſia* will not be well at Eaſe, before *Europe* be in Blood and Confuſion. I own, ſince the Reformation, ſomething has caſt up in *Europe*, to the Prejudice of the *Popiſh* Intereſt, that might be applied to this Trumpet; for a third Part of it, or thereby, is made too hot for them: And if we may believe their own Writers, near a Third of all their religious Houſes have gone to Wreck. But two Things hinder to cloſe compleatly with this. The *four Angels*, in the Beginning of the 7th Chapter, ſeem yet to be reſtraining the Winds, till God has gathered the above-ſpecified Number of Converts. It is true, we know not how foreward this is, for only *the Lord knoweth who are his*: And tho' the Converſion of the *Jews* has made no Noiſe, yet in the World there may be a great many we know little about. Again, it would appear we ſhould expect the Sounding of the firſt Trumpet, and the Judgment at leaſt to begin before the Sound of the ſecond; which, whatever it may ſignify, has not hitherto been ſo obſervable.

TRUMPET III.

10 And the third Angel ſounded, and there fell a great Star from Heaven, burning as it were a Lamp, and it fell upon the third Part of the Rivers, and upon the Fountains of Waters.

11 And the Name of the Star is called Wormwood, and the third Part of the Waters became Wormwood, and many Men died of the Waters, becauſe they were made bitter.

WE find nothing among the Plagues of *Egypt* this ſeems ſo very exactly to allude to, nor ſhall we preſs any of them to give any Illuſtration; for if any of them have an Eye this Way, it muſt be the firſt, which we ſhewed was more a-kin to the *ſecond Trumpet*. There is as little to be fetcht from the third Vial, except that both Plagues lighted on the Fountains and Rivers; and ſo we proceed to conſider, as in the former two, 1. The Type of the Judgment. 2. The Effects thereof.

I. The Judgment, which ſeems to differ much from the former two: Here we have to conſider, 1. The Type or Thing. 2. The Object.

1. The Emblem of the Cauſe of this Miſchief: Where we have ſeveral Things to conſider about it, becauſe of its extraordinary Nature; As,

(1.) From its Appearance, *A great Star.* We heard before, when we ſpoke of the *Church*, the *Stars* thereof are the Miniſters of the Goſpel; when we hear of other Societies, then by *Stars* we are to mean the moſt Eminent among them, as was proven, *Chap.* vi. 13. Here the Difficulty is the greater, becauſe it is not agreed whether theſe *Trumpets* be *Perſecutions* againſt the Church, or *Plagues* on her Enemies: Theſe who take it in the firſt Senſe, find no Difficulty in explaining this Trumpet, tho' they have a great Struggle with ſome of the reſt; nor did I ever meet with one Reaſon why we ſhould not underſtand them all to look the ſame Way. And allowing this to be meant of the Church, then a *fallen Star* is immediately an apoſtatiſing Miniſtry; and ſo they do very well till they come to the Application, when they fall into Shivers. But this will not do, if we make the Interpretation of this Viſion to *God's Enemies*: For tho' we may make a Shift to eſtabliſh the Meaning of a *Star*, and a great Star, yet we are at a Loſs how to manage *this Star's falling from Heaven*, unleſs we take it in a moſt remote Senſe, as we were obliged to do, *Chap.* vi. 14. yet another Method I cannot fall on: We therefore muſt allow this Star to be ſome great Man, or Order of Men under *Antichriſt*, which ſhines among them as a great Star in Heaven; and that he is a Sort of Oracle to the World, either by Force or Fraud, for any of theſe will diſtinguiſh among the Children of Darkneſs. And whatever is meant by this Emblem, they will make no mean Appearance, in his, or their Time, which will be as much diſtinguiſhed from others, as a great Star in Heaven is.

(2.) This Star is ſaid *to fall from Heaven.* We have a very low Notion of any Thing that falls; and the higher any is, when he falls, he is thereby made the more contemptible. There is indeed a Phraſe common enough of fallen Stars; but how little Truth even the Sons of Nature have found in this, all know: And the wiſer Sort work at it, and tell us, What we take for a fallen Star, is but a Meteor kindled far below the Starry Frame, and have nothing in them of the Nature of Stars. As for Scripture, we have nothing can be of Uſe to illuſtrate it; ſo that we muſt ſeek it from the Word *fallen*, or rather *falling*; for here it is not *paſſive*, but muſt be underſtood *actively*, q. d. this Star did fall down or come down: And ſo, whoever be meant thereby, his Falling is a voluntary Deed: As we find the Word uſed concerning *Jairus*, Mark v. 22. *When he ſaw Jeſus, he fell at his Feet*; which we are not to doubt was a moſt cheerful Deed, and was accompanied with Thought and Conſideration. And therefore we are not to mean the caſting down of this Star, or his falling for want of Power to ſupport him; but his coming down as from Heaven, with a glorious Appearance, which engaged Spectators, and brought them over by Admiration to Submiſſion unto him. This is the more confirmed from what is further ſaid about this Star in the

(3.) *Burning as it were a Lamp*: He came burning with a feigned Zeal, elſe he would have been more than *like a Lamp.* It is but a weak Thought of a great Man, who would have him like the Sun in Appearance; for the Text tells us, there was as great Difference betwixt him and the Sun, as is betwixt the *Sun* and a *Lamp*: However, it is plain he would make a very great Show. And this Expreſſion is more heightned, while he is compared to a *Lamp*, which ſhines, as well as burns; ſo that he will make a very notable Appearance: And herein he has a faint Reſemblance of the glorious *Lights* of the Church, who are called by our Lord *burning and ſhining.* From all theſe put together, I am ready to think the Truth of this Judgment will be ſome notable Impoſtor, not a faithful Miniſtry making Defection, but a Knot of Knaves advancing very ſtrange Things: Nor yet in the Church, but within the Precincts of *Babylon.* How many *Cockatrices* have been hatched there already, the World needs not be informed of: But it would appear from this Text, there is ſomewhat more notable to caſt up, than what has been ſeen ſince the fourth Seal; for indeed all the reſt will be but petty in Compariſon of him or his Predeceſſor: And ſo we find it only ſaid, Many Men ſhall die of *theſe Waters* he ſhall imbitter.

(4.) We have this Emblem deſigned from his Name, *Wormwood.* To be ſure this is not a Name he or they will take to themſelves, but is a Name impoſed from God, from the Truth of the Thing: Nor is this Name given here to diſcredit the Reputation of the Herb which has this Name, and has juſtly come under, among the Sons of Medicine; but it is taken from the Effects. We have two great Evils in Scripture repreſented by *Wormwood*, 1. Sin and downright Reſiſtance of God and his Word; ſo *Moſes* ſaid, *Deut.* xxix. 18. *Leſt there ſhould be a Root among you that beareth Gall and Wormwood.* And again, *Amos* ſpeaks to the ſame Purpoſe, *Amos* vii. *Ye who turn Judgment to Wormwood.* 2. The Judgments of God are compared to Wormwood, *Jer.* ix. 15. *Therefore, thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, the God of* Iſrael, *Behold, I will even feed this People with Wormwood.* We find it again a ſpecial Judgment denounced againſt falſe Teachers, as a Judgment proportional to their Sin, *Jer.* xxiii. 15.

There-

Therefore, thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, concerning the Prophets, I will feed them with Wormwood, and make them drink the Water of Gall. Nor is any Thing more ordinary in Scripture, than for God to impoſe Names agreeable to the Nature of Things, and not according to Peoples Affections: So we find our Lord named of God, *Iſa.* ix. 6. *Immanuel, God with us.*

That theſe notable Errors and Hereſies are called Wormwood, is moſt agreeable, if we conſider theſe Things, 1. It infects and taſtes all that is mixed with it; which is true of *Wormwood*, ſo that a great Phyſician ſays of *Wormwood*, *Abſynthium adeo amarum eſt, ut melli ſuccus ejus injectus, amaritudine ſua vincat ſuavitatem.* And what is this elſe than what is ſaid of *Error*, eſpecially *Idolatry*? Amos vi. 12. *Ye have turned Judgment into Gall, and the Fruit of Righteouſneſs into Hemlock.* 2. It marrs the Sight; ſo that theſe who uſe it much are very tender-eyed, and cannot take up Things truly as they are: So it is with Error, it debauches the Judgment, that they are incapable of any right Notions of Truth: And beſides, the Affections are intoxicate ſo, that they can reliſh nothing which is not a-kin to their beloved Principles, how falſe ſoever.

2. The Objects mentioned are two, *v.* 10. *Rivers, and Fountains of Waters.* By Waters we are, in a prophetick Stile, to underſtand *Doctrines*: And it is noted, when *Waters* ſignify not Croſſes, as they do oft, then they are to be meant of Doctrines, as we ſhall hear afterwards at more Length. Now here is the Diſtribution of Water into *Rivers* and *Fountains*: The *River* is more capacious, and waters whole Provinces; whereas *Fountains* are more ſcanty, and ſupply but a few. It will be hard to hit the preciſe Meaning of the *Spirit of God* in the Place; we ſhall at the Time hint only at what we judge to be plauſible. By *Rivers* then, I think may be underſtood *Courts* or *Palaces Royal*, where either Truths or Errors are juſtified or condemned by Authority, as well as Practice: Thus we read of *Righteouſneſs to run down as a River*; that is, from the Seats of Judgment, to water whole Kingdoms and Provinces: The bad Influence of an ill-diſpoſed Court, theſe Nations have felt to their Regrate ofter than once. And ſo it would appear, when this daring Wickedneſs ſhall come abroad in the World, it will take its Riſe from ſome great Court, whoſe Credit will keep it in Countenance till it be able to run down Truth itſelf. And by *Fountains* may be underſtood *inferior Seminaries* and Nurſeries, which being poiſoned, muſt in Time make a moſt miſerable Harveſt in riper Years. To what elſe is owing all theſe Floods of perverſe Opinions, and prophane Practices, but Youths being contaminat in their greener Years? Nor is it poſſible to affect many and mighty Changes of this Nature, but by ſapping the Foundations, by poiſoning the Wells; and theſe do of Courſe affect the Rivers, and by Degrees the whole Body politick becomes corrupted.

II. There are the Effects, and theſe are twofold,

1. Upon the Object, *The Waters became Wormwood.* We find the *Iſraelites* making a terrible Outcry at *Meribah*, Exod. xv. 23. they could not drink the Waters becauſe of their *Bitterneſs.* But how much more dangerous is it to have the *Fountains* and *Rivers* of Religion and Morality corrupted? tho' alas, becauſe of our baſe Taſte of Things, we are not ſo ſoon ſenſible of any Vitiation this Way: And yet at moſt the former can prejudge our Health, but the latter obſtructs our Salvation; we ought therefore be very careful what we admit as Principle. Truth will endure to be ſifted; not ſo is Error, for it flees the Light. Our Popiſh Adverſaries have been aware of this, and therefore make it their Work, firſt to put out their Peoples Eyes, and then they know it will be eaſy to lead them at Pleaſure.

But it may be objected, Seeing this Star is to fall among the Enemies of Chriſt, we may be eaſy about the malign Influences thereof. To this I repone, 1. The Enemies of Chriſt are not contained in a particular Spot of the World; for, as of old *Satan* was among the Children of God, ſo to this Day there are Enemies to the Truth every where. We may eaſily believe it, they are not all good Proteſtants who ſay they abhor *Popery*; There are many in the pureſt Churches, who would be eaſily prevailed with to give up with the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity: The little Practice of Godlineſs among us, is a ſad Proof of this. 2. Whatever Errors or Hereſies have been broached in *Rome*, or elſewhere, they are not confined to their native Countries, but often walk abroad, and viſit remote Places: Yea, was there ever an Error in *Rome*, but in a ſhort Time has found Patriots in Proteſtant Churches? And many of theſe, as the *Socinian*, *Arian*, *Arminian*, and *Enthuſiaſm* in all its Shapes, *&c.* have gained a great deal of Ground in Proteſtant Countries, almoſt to the Defacing of famous Churches. Should any be ſilent while theſe are rampant?

2. Effect flows from the firſt, *And many Men died of the Waters, becauſe they were made bitter.* This may be underſtood either of a *ſpiritual Death*, being poiſoned by

the Errors, and ſo they made Shipwreck of the Faith. Or it may be underſtood of a *violent Death*, for Error always ends in Perſecution; and thoſe whom they cannot decoy, if it be in their Power they are ſure to deſtroy. Which ever Way we take it, they may be ſaid to die of theſe bitter Waters.

As to the Application of this, the Throng of Expoſitors think this is over long ſince; and ſome pitch upon the third, ſome the fourth, and ſome a later Century. But from what I have ſaid, it appears pretty plain, however many Deluders are already in the World, Satan is not exhauſted of that Sort of Artillery, there are yet more to come: And tho' they introduce the Doctrines of *Devils*, they'll give out they have them from Heaven; and their Authors will appear to the unthinking World, as if they were *Stars*, yea, and of the firſt Magnitude too. Let us conſider, tho' they be more guilty that broach theſe Errors, yet it will be a mortal Guilt in all that join with them in the ſame.

TRUMPET IV.

12 And the fourth Angel ſounded, and the third Part of the Sun was ſmitten, and the third Part of the Moon, and the third Part of the Stars, ſo as the third Part of them was darkned: And the Day ſhone not for a third Part of it, and the Night likewiſe.

THIS *Trumpet* has, in the Conſequents thereof, ſomethings apparently more difficult than any Thing we have yet ſeen in them; Nor can I find any of the Plagues on *Egypt* that come very near it: 'Tis true, the Plague of *Darkneſs* that was over all the *Land of Egypt*, Exod. x. 22. except where the *Iſraelites* dwelt, ſeems to come neareſt it; but then that Darkneſs laſted three Days, whereas this is for the third Part of the Day, and the Night. Nor will we be much mended when we have Recourſe to *Vial* 4th, *Rev.* xvi. 8. for there the Vial is indeed poured out upon the Sun, but the Conſequent is not Darkneſs, for then the Sun could not trouble them, but a ſcorching Heat. It muſt be owned alſo, that the other Prophets give but little Light to this from their Writings, and therefore the more Diſcretion is to be uſed in the Inveſtigation of this dark and intricate Paſſage of the Prophecy. It is much more eaſy to find Fault with the Opinions of theſe who have written before, than put a better in their Room. Nay, I am ready to believe, none has yet been honoured to diſcover the Senſe of this; for ſuch as apply this to the *Church*, ſeem, as I have hinted before, to be far from the Senſe of any of the Trumpets; neither will the Threed of the Prophecy allow it. Others again, who apply it to the obſcuring the Glory of the *Roman Empire*, are as far wide; becauſe, as I advanced before, this Prophecy is not to give the Emergents or Revolutions in any Kingdom, further than the Church is concerned therein. They are yet leſs to be hearkned to, who would have the Application of this Trumpet to the *Jews*; for that Nation was quite removed before the Apoſtle had this Revelation. Others again apply this to the *ſixth Century*, when the *Pope*, according to them, roſe to his Height. I own, this is very conſiſtent with their Principles concerning the reſt of this Prophecy: But then, if it ſhould be found that the *third Seal* produced the *Pope*, yea, or that he was not at his *Prime* for ſome Time after, they will have little to ſay. But this is not the Buſineſs of the Trumpets, as we ſhall hear on *Chap.* xiii. The grand Bottom I find theſe go on, which apply this to the Church, is, becauſe they have a fond Conceit, That wherever we read of the *Sun* in Prophecy, *Chriſt* is to be underſtood; and wherever we have mention of the *Moon*, the *Church* is to be meant; and always the *Stars* are to ſignify the *Miniſtry*: Had this Opinion been as evidently made out as it is confidently aſſerted, our Work would have been very ſhort. But it ſeems to be an unequal Way of Reaſoning, That becauſe the Church is a World, and as ſuch muſt have Sun, Moon, and Stars of her own Nature, which I readily yield; that therefore the Enemies of the Church, who are much oftner called a *World*, ſhould be allowed none of theſe according to their Nature. Nor do I ſcruple to affirm this to be the προτον-ψευδος that has moved theſe learned Men to incumber this, and many other Pieces of Prophecy, by a ſtaunch adhering to theſe ill-proven Principles. I gave a ſhort Touch at this, on *Chap.* vi. 12. but here I ſhall be a little more particular.

I ſhall therefore offer a few Scriptures, where the Sun is taken *enigmatically* by the Prophets, for ſomewhat elſe than Jeſus Chriſt; and if the Univerſality of their Propoſition be broken, there is no Room to contend for its Truth, and much leſs to cry out againſt theſe who differ from their Sentiments. We find the *Sun* to ſignify a State of *Proſperity*, applied to particular Perſons: So a Woman who has her Husband alive, and

and her Children about her, is ſaid to have her *Sun ſhining*; and when ſhe is made ſuddenly a Widow, and Childleſs at once, it is ſaid of her, *Jer.* xv. 9. *Her Sun is gone down while it was yet Day*: Which in plain Language is added, *She hath been aſhamed and confounded.* Again, we are underſtand by the *Sun* a Time of *Peace* and Security; for, while the Lord threatens the *Iſraelites* for their Sins, and tells them in plain Terms what Judgments he was to bring upon them, he ſums them all in this one comprehenſive Threatning, *Amos* viii. 9. *In that Day, ſaith the Lord God, I will cauſe the Sun to go down at Noon, and I will darken the Earth in the clear Day.* In *Joſeph*'s Dream, we have the *Sun*, *Moon* and *Stars*; yet, when his *Father* heard it, he did interpret it in a quite other Senſe from theſe *Gentlemen*: Yea, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt tells us, *Matth.* xiii. 6. that the *Sun* is an Emblem of *Perſecution.* A great many more Inſtances may be accumulate, but theſe may ſuffice to diſprove the Univerſality of their Propoſition.)

Our Difficulty yet remains; nor can I promiſe to remove it: Only I ſhall here, as in the former Trumpets, conſider a little, 1. The Emblem of the Judgment. 2. The Effects thereof.

I. The Emblem of this Judgment, *The third Part of the Sun was ſmitten, and the third Part of the Moon, and the third Part of the Stars.* This ſeems not to be ſo terrible a Blow upon the Enemies of the Church, as what they met with under the *ſixth Seal*; yet it ſeems to be a very heavy One, for the Time of its Continuance. It is well obſerved, by a learned Expoſitor of this Prophecy, *That a critical Inveſtigation of this Emblem, will rather more perplex, than clear the Text.* And therefore I ſhall only make a few Remarks on it.

1. While Mention is made of the *Sun*, *Moon* and *Stars*, it ſeems to point at an univerſal Evil, becauſe their Influence is ſo; and then the Senſe of it is, That all the Enemies of God's Church ſhall be ſenſible of this Plague, for none of them but live under the Benefit of theſe Luminaries.

2. It will extend to all Ranks and Degrees amongſt them, from the higheſt to the loweſt, they ſhall feel it; for ſo we were taught to underſtand Sun, Moon and Stars, *Chap.* vi. 12. &c. there will then be a Cloud, but of Terror, upon all their high Places and Defences.

3. It will be a Stroke immediately from Heaven; and ſo it is rendred, they ſhall be *ſmitten*, but it is not ſaid by whom: But this ſeems neceſſarily to follow; for who has Power over theſe Luminaries, but the Moſt High? A learned Antiquary tells us, This is a common Expreſſion from the *Hebrews*, to denote an Eclipſe; for they imagined, That either Sun or Moon, as they were under Eclipſe, were ſmitten of God. But, with all due Regard to that learned Perſon, I ſee not how reaſonably we can bring in a vulgar Error, to clear a difficult Text; nor does he offer for the Proof this Propoſition, That the Scripture always humours the common and miſtaken Notions of the Populace. Should this be allowed, we would quickly run ourſelves into the greateſt Confuſion; for they among us (and if the rudeſt Notions hold in one Period, why not in another?) commonly ſay, There is a Conflict betwixt the Sun and Moon in an Eclipſe. But, how do the learned Part of the World make themſelves merry with ſuch rude and indigeſted Thoughts? And, may One ask, What more Regard ſhould be paid to a *Jewiſh* Error, than one under *Chriſtianity*, eſpecially that God did not think it neceſſary, by his Word, to inſtruct them in all the Parts of *Aſtronomy*? Allowing then the Apoſtle's Advice to ſhun theſe *old Wives Fables*, and to ſpeak according to the Nature of the Thing, this is a Stroke inflicted of God, and if not immediately, yet in a very diſcernible Manner.

4. It is ſaid, *The third Part* of theſe Luminaries were obſcured: It matters very little, whether we underſtand this of the Degree of their Light, or the Time that they ſhine; only, in the latter Caſe, it would occaſion a third Part of the Day and the Night to be ſpent in abſolute Darkneſs; whereas, in the former, there will only be a Diminution of their Light in a third Part: This ſeems to be more agreeable to the Letter of the Text. Tho' ſome think, from the Stars, it would appear a third Part of them will be obſcured, becauſe it is not ſaid, a third Part of every one of theſe Stars ſhall be ſmitten: Yet, I humbly think, without ſtretching Matters, we may underſtand the Leſſening of their Light, rather than their Number; for it is ſaid, *The Day and the Night did not ſhine for a third Part*; i. e. there will be a Diminution of the Light of the Day, and of the Night, by a third Part, from what was ordinary.

II. We have the Effects of theſe Cauſes, *So that the third Part of them was darkened, and the Day ſhone not for a third Part, and the Night likewiſe.* The ſame Difficulty occurs, whether it is to be underſtood of the third Part of the Degree of Light, or the third Part of Time. If we had in our View the Accompliſhment of this Pro-

phecy, there could be no Trouble to apply the ſame; but ſeeing the Intendment thereof is to come, it is very hard for any to determine what is within the Comprehenſion of this Trumpet: And therefore I wrap up this in theſe few Things;

1. That there will be a great Retrenching of their Proſperity, even to a Third of it, which is not agreeable to theſe who uſe to live at large. The beſt of their Comforts will be then curtail'd, and they will be very ſenſible thereof; but ſeeing 'tis not ſaid wherein, but advanced in general, I think we may underſtand it in the moſt extenſive Manner, and ſo it will reach the whole Body of *Antichriſt*: Yet, I muſt ſay, there is this Difficulty in this Trumpet, I cannot ſolve, Whether this dark Diſpenſation will be in their Apprehenſions (for gloomy Thoughts ſowre all preſent Comforts) or if it will be in Reality, and as to the Nature of the Thing? or which of theſe ſhall moſt prevail?

2. That in the Night of their Adverſity, they will be deprived of a good Part of the Comfort of the reſt of the Creation, who, in Abſence of the Sun, have the Moon and Stars, partly to ſupply the Abſence of the Sun, and partly as a Pledge of his Return to them next Day; But here, in the Night of their Adverſity, they are ſhortned as to leſſer Comforts, and conſequently a Degree of Deſpair will mix itſelf in their Affliction, which gives the greateſt Increaſe to a Calamity; for, where there is the leaſt Ground of Hope, it will ſweeten the harſheſt Things we can meet with; but when gloomy Deſpair takes Place, it will infallibly double our Croſſes. This ſeems to be the Condition of *Babylon* at this Time.

3. There is a Limitation of the Time of this Miſery, *For a third Part of the Day, and the Night likewiſe.* There is indeed this Difficulty here, I ſee not how any Man can extricate himſelf from, Whether this is to continue but for one third Part of a Day, and the third Part of the Night ſucceeding? or, if it is to be the daily Food of *Antichriſt*, after this Trumpet, that they ſhall never have one intire Day's Peace, or one Night's Reſt? I acknowledge there is no downright Warrant from the Text, to cloſe with either Side; but yet, I think, it may be allowed in the latter Senſe; and my Reaſon is, If we ſhould ſuppoſe this to continue but *one Day*, and *one Night*, if we allow it to be a natural Day, the third Part of both is but eight Hours Space, which no Body will believe is the Senſe of it. And, if we take it *prophetically*, then the third Part of a Day is four Months; but when we come to the Night, we find it not to have any prophetick Senſe, ſo as to determine the Continuance of any Thing for ſhorter or longer Space: And therefore, I am humbly of the Mind, the Meaning of this is, *Babylon* or *Antichriſt* will never be in better Circumſtances afterwards; and my Reaſon for it is, By *Day and Night*, in Scripture, we are to underſtand the ſame Thing as *continually*. No Body ever doubted this, while they are expreſſed intirely, nor will it doubt for us: For, to wait Day and Night, to meditate Day and Night, to pray Day and Night, to watch Day and Night, *&c.* (for a great many Expreſſions and Quotations might be adduced) all of them ſignify, in the Judgment of all the World, the ſame with *continually*. Let this then be ſet as a notable Step, over which *Antichriſt* cannot go: Yea, there is more in it, for he was declining in the Sound of the other three Angels; But the Meaning is, He ſhall never regain the Ground he has loſt. This Viſion, if we have hit the Senſe of it, contains a moſt comfortable Doctrine to the *Church of God*; for, ſeeing *Babylon* has begun to fall before the *Ark of the Lord*, ſhe ſhall never proſper or recover, but always the longer be the weaker. And, it is the more to be noted, that there is here the Defalcation of the third Part of his Health, Strength, *&c.* which, I humbly think, when all third Parts are joined together, as we had them eſpecially in the preceeding Trumpet, this tells us all theſe Things are yet to come, tho' I hope they are in a great Forwardneſs, and perhaps are nearer than we think of.

As to the Application of this, to be ſure, we can be no more certain about it, than what is paſt; eſpecially that, according to our View of this Prophecy, all theſe Events are to come. However, I ſhall offer a Conjecture: The firſt two Trumpets will weaken *Antichriſt* very much, yet not ſo as to diſpirit him: But the third being an Impoſtor, and having all the Advantages of the *Pope* and *Mahomet* (and perhaps fraught with the Widom of this World) and coming out of the Bowels of *Babylon*, will create her more Miſchief than all has been before. Nor is it any new Thing to ſee one Viper eat its Way through the Bowels of another, its Mother that hatch'd it (if we can believe *Pliny* that famous Hiſtorian, about the Nature of Things) Now this Monſter, (for he muſt be more that comes of ſuch a Kind; and is worſe) will occaſion ſuch a Concuſſion to the whole Fabrick of *Babylon*; and he may be as far from the Truth as ſhe, yet be as far from her as from the Truth: So that tho' the Intereſt of the Church be not ſtrengthned by him, yet the Power of *Babylon* will be weakned. And then, this fourth Trumpet ſhews the ſad Effects of this Angel upon the Kingdom of *Antichriſt*; for he will

will obſcure or darken a third Part of her Glory, both by Day and Night; and at this Time ſhe will, in all Probability, receive ſuch a Wound, as ſhall never be healed, as ſometime ago her deadly Wound was.

If our Conjectures ſhould hold, I know not a more comfortable Ground to the *Church of God*, who are always, and juſtly, affrighted with the Appearance of new Hereſies, and unthought-of Errors in the World; for this is a ſure Sign of the Downfall of the Church's greateſt Enemy, we know that *evil Men grow worſe and worſe.* And God will allow that fruitful Mother of Abominations to produce her whole Spawn; which, tho' they will be uneaſy and unpleaſant to the Church, yet will prove deſtructive of *Babylon.* In the Corruption of all Things there are heterogenious Productions; and no Wonder, when *Antichriſt* is corrupting, we ſee Monſters produced.

13 And I beheld, and heard an Angel flying through the Midſt of Heaven, ſaying with a loud Voice, Wo, wo, wo, to the Inhabiters of the Earth, by reaſon of the other Voices of the Trumpet of the three Angels which are yet to ſound.

This Verſe is interjected betwixt the four firſt Trumpets, and the following three: Which has moved a great many to think, all the former four were to be upon the Field at once; but there is no Reaſon brought for this. Others, with more Ground, tell us, This Introduction is made here, becauſe the Import of theſe Parts of the Prophecy, under the Soundings of the following Angels, is more conſiderable, and of more Importance, than what was under the Sounding of the other four: The Text itſelf juſtifies this; for, tho' there was a Wo in all the reſt, yet nothing comparable to what is in any of theſe three. Here we ſhall notice theſe Things, 1. The Herauld. 2. His Denunciation. 3. The Reaſon he gives thereof, which will alſo account for the Manner of his Motion.

1. The Herauld, *An Angel flying through the Midſt of Heaven.* We are much perplexed, and with little Reaſon, about this Angel; ſome would have him to be one, and ſome to be another: The ſureſt Notion about him, is to leave him as we find him in the Text, *i. e. An Angel.* Nor do I ſee any Neceſſity to make an Emblem of him; or, if we do, I think they are neareſt it, who make him the ſame with theſe Angels in the 14th Chapter of this Prophecy: But, we have ſome Things noted about him, 1. He was a flying Angel; this notes both Zeal and Expedition. 2. The Place where he moved, through the Midſt of Heaven; here it was *John* had the Viſion, *Chap* iv. 1. And if *Heaven* there be an Emblem of any Thing, to be ſure it muſt be the *Church*; tho' not as the Valley of Viſion, but as the Church was there: And therefore, we allow this Angel to repreſent the *Miniſtry* of the Goſpel; it ſhews their Faithfulneſs, to adverti ſe of *Babylon*'s Fall. 3. The Evidence the Apoſtle had of this, which, we find, was to two of his Senſes; he *ſaw* him, and then he *heard* him: Nor do I ſee what more can be made of this, than to eſtabliſh the Credibility of the Thing. And if there is to be any Thing in the Church that correſponds thereto, it muſt be the Notoriety of the Manifeſtation.

2. The Denunciation he made, *Wo, wo, wo, to the Inhabitants of the Earth.* If we take *Earth* as above, we have little Difficulty; this is a plain Denunciation of the Miſery of all theſe who ſtand up againſt the Church: And that the *Wo* is trebled, is, becauſe there were three Trumpets to ſound, and each of them were to bring a particular Wo along with it; and that the laſt will be heavier than any of the other two, for we may obſerve this all along, the ſaddeſt of God's Judgments come in the Rear.

3. The Reaſon given, *By Reaſon of the other Voices of the Trumpet of the three Angels which are yet to ſound.* As for that Difficulty here, that the *Trumpet* is in the Singular, and the Angels in the Plural, it will be eaſily reſolved, if we allow *Trumpet* to be a Collective, which muſt be done here, becauſe we found each of the Angels had a particular Trumpet aſſigned him, *v.* 2.

Nor can I miſs to notice here, all our Expoſitors ſeem inclinable to believe, theſe three laſt Trumpets are deſigned againſt the Enemies of the Church; except a few of them, who, againſt all Senſe and Reaſon, would have God ſtrike againſt both his Church and their Enemies at the ſame Time: And, if it ſhould be ſo here, I am pretty confident it is the firſt Inſtance of this Kind they will find in Scripture; nor can any Thing be produced from this Text to juſtify ſuch a ſtrange Thought.

As for the Notions ſome have of the *Angel*, and the *Period*, I ſhall ſay nothing, having given my Mind about the Herauld; and as for the Time, I am ſure it is betwixt

the fourth and fifth Trumpet, which none can deny: And to ſay more, none can ſpeak with Certainty.

CHAP. IX.

THIS Chapter carries on the Hiſtory of the Trumpets, and contains two; the fifth, to *v.* 12. the ſixth, to the Cloſe: But whether they extend further, ſhall be enquired afterwards. Theſe two are plainly more comprehenſive and ſubſtantial than all the *other four*; even allowing this Chapter to contain them both, we find them more circumſtantiate: But conſidering, the Diſtance of their Accompliſhment is great, we cannot have much more Certainty about them than the former, and therefore we deſign to be very modeſt in our Enquiries.

TRUMPET V.

WE have the Contents of this, to *v.* 12. and, to be ſure, it repreſents to us a very notable Event, and yet to come, as we will find when we have viewed its ſeveral Parts, which I take up in this Method: 1. The Emblems, which are ſeverals, and each of them flowing from another; ſo that the laſt is the moſt ſignificant, and which we are eſpecially to conſider, *v.* 1, 2, 3. 2. Their Power, *v.* 3. in the latter Part. 3. The Reſtriction of their Power, for they are more remarkably limited than any of the reſt, *v.* 4, 5. 4. The Miſchief they will do notwithſtanding of the Limitation, *v.* 6. 5. The hierogliphical Account of the laſt and moſt ſignificant Emblem, to *v.* 11. 6. Their Ruler or Governor, under whoſe Direction and Management they are, *v.* 11.

1 AND the fifth Angel ſounded, and I ſaw a Star fall from Heaven unto the Earth, and to him was given the Key of the bottomleſs Pit.

2 And he opened the bottomleſs Pit, and there aroſe out of the Pit a Smoke, as the Smoke of a great Furnace, and the Sun and the Air were darkned by Reaſon of the Smoke of the Pit.

3 And there came out of the Smoke Locuſts upon the Earth;——

Here are no leſs than four Emblems upon the Sounding of this Trumpet, 1. The *Star*. 2. The *Key of the bottomleſs Pit*, v. 2. 3. The *Smoke that came out of the Pit*. 4. The *Locuſts that came out of the Smoke*.

I. The firſt of theſe Emblems is a *Star*, of whom it is ſaid, *I ſaw a Star fall from Heaven unto the Earth*. I am not fond of challenging our Tranſlation; yet I muſt be allowed to ſay, That in this Place, as well as others, there may be got a Verſion as near the Original, particularly in this Place, where, with more Exactneſs, it might be turned, *I ſaw a Star which had fallen from Heaven*. By our Tranſlators, it would appear the Apoſtle had ſeen this *Star fall from Heaven*, upon the *Sounding of this Trumpet*: But, according to the *Greek*, he only ſaw a *Star* that had *fallen* ſometime (we cannot tell how long) before. It is not in the *Preſent*, but *Preterit*. I own, it is a very hard Matter to make a Conjecture about this *Star*; tho' I have given in general the common Notion of a *Star*, either in the Church, or among her Enemies. It is not agreed as to this: Some tell us, This *Star* is the *Papacy*. And here, indeed, I find the Generality of Expoſitors date his Riſe, except ſome who would have this *Trumpet* exhibite to us the *Jeſuites*, which all know was long after the Appearance of his pretended Holineſs. I only repone to this (and I refuſe any Thing better can be ſet in its Place) that the *Pope* roſe under the *third Seal*; nor ſhall I offer to alter it here, till what was advanced on that *Seal*, and what is further to be ſaid on *Chap.* xiii. be ſolidly confuted.

But abſtracting from that, ſome tell us, This *Star* is the ſame we heard of before, under the *third Trumpet*. I own, it is not impoſſible this may be the ſame, but it is very hard to prove it: Yet it ſeems to be very plain, if this *Star* is not the ſame in point of *Miſchief*, he is much a-kin to him; and if we allow this *Star* to be capable of more

more Miſchiefs than what appeared under that Trumpet, it will be no Hardſhip to allow them to be the ſame, for there are ſeveral Things in them both of great Affinity: As, 1. That Star is ſaid to have his Name *Wormwood*; and the Effects of this is, to *torment Men like a Scorpion.* 2. In the third Trumpet he was ſeen to fall, here he was ſeen only as fallen ſometime before; yea, and it would appear, our Apoſtle's Acquaintance with this Star before, was ſuch, as he knew him again. 3. We are to conſider here, the Star had got ſome conſiderable Reinforcements, more than what he had before; and ſo under the third Trumpet he played the *Jugler*, more by Art and Slight, than Power: But here he gets Auxiliaries, and acts a quite different Part; for all are added to him, that the Opening of the bottomleſs Pit can furniſh him with. This I am ſure of, none can diſprove them to be the ſame; For all the Reaſon given is, That the former fell upon the Rivers and Fountains, but this is ſaid to be upon the Earth: This, in my Opinion, has little Weight in it; for, might not what had at firſt Touch met with what was underſtood by Rivers and Fountains, have afterward made his Way unto the ſolid Earth? Nor indeed can I ſee but he infallibly would; for, having corrupted the *Fountains* and *Rivers*, he might then ſafely creep abroad. But after all, I ſhall be eaſy, whether this *Star* be the ſame, or another; allow him to have (which cannot be denied) the ſame Malignity, but in a greater Degree. However, let this *Star* be the ſame, or a different from the former, it will not much help in the Application; and therefore we paſs it, and proceed to conſider the

II. Emblem, the Tool he was provided with, *To him was given the Key of the bottomleſs Pit; and he opened the bottomleſs Pit.* Here we have to conſider theſe Things to clear this Part of the Type.

1. The Place, called *the bottomleſs Pit.* But here we have two Subſtantives of different Genders, which will never make a *Subſtantive* and an *Adjective*, as in our Tranſlation. Beſides, both the Subſtantives have *prefixed Articles*, which at leaſt ſhew each of them muſt have the full Force of their original Import; but I ſhall fetch their Meanings from Scripture, the ſureſt Rule of Interpretation, and will help to Light in the ſeveral Parts of the Context: As, 1. A Pit, φρεαρ *a* φρεω *emitto.* It is rendred a Well, *John* iv. 11. *The Well is deep.* It is alſo taken for a Moraſs, where Men and Beaſts may be in Hazard of drowning, *Luke* xiv. 5. *Which if you ſhall have an Ox or an Aſs fall into a Pit.* Or, as ſome rather encline to render it, a *Mire* or a *Quag*, i. e. a Place abounding with Springs, which always keeps the Ground looſe about them. Others again tell us, its moſt proper Signification is the *Chimny* or Lumb of a Houſe, which has a *Call*, as they name it, *i. e.* the free Courſe of the Air up the Paſſage to carry up the Smoke: Tho' I find no Scripture to juſtify this, it ſeems a very natural Signification of the Word, and may not be impertinent in this Place. 2. We have what our Tranſlators call in this Place *bottomleſs*, ἄβυσσος from α & βύσσος *pro* βύθος, without Ground or Bottom, and therefore they turn it *bottomleſs*; but here, and indeed everywhere elſe, it is a Subſtantive. It is taken variouſly in Scripture: The Septuagint apply it to the Judgments of God, *Pſal.* xxxvi. 6. *Thy Judgments are a great Depth*: Or to ſignify the *Sea*, as when we have it called *deep* in our Tranſlation. Yet I cannot ſay I have met with it in any of theſe Senſes in the *New Teſtament*, but generally it is to be underſtood of the Place of the Damned, *Luke* viii. 31. *The Devils beſought him, he would not command them to go out into the Deep.* And again, 2 *Pet.* ii. 4. *God ſpared not the Angels that ſinned, but caſt them down to Hell.* Now, by the Spring, Fountain, or Chimny of Hell, we muſt underſtand the Agency of Devils, or theſe damnable Errors that he promotes in the World: Here it may ſignify the *worſt Thing* in *Hell*, i. e. the Enmity againſt Chriſt and his *Kingdom.* One renders it *the Sink of Hell*, i. e. the fouleſt and worſt Part of it.

2. The Inſtrument he got for this Place, *And to him was given the Key of the bottomleſs Pit.* By *Key*, I ſhewed on *Chap.* i. 18. we are to mean Power and Command. But here it may be asked, To whom was this *Key* given? Some ſay, To the Angel that had the *Trumpet*: But I think this hard, to make the Angel that had this Trumpet be the Executioner, when it was not ſo much as once dreamt of in the former four; and particularly that we have a next Antecedent here, *viz.* the *Star.* Nor will it mend the Matter, to ſay the *Star* could not manage the *Key*; for both the *Star* and the *Key* are Figures and Symbols. It will be as eaſy to reſolve this next Queſtion, Who gave it him? To be ſure he had it from *him who has the Keys of Hell and Death*: And here, *giving*, may import no more but a bare Permiſſion, for it was a limited Power, for he could do no more than open it; for we find *another* afterwards had Power to ſhut it, and to *bind Satan.*

3. His Action, *He opened the bottomleſs Pit*, or he ſet looſe the *Lumb* of the infernal Pit. This *Star* ſeems to be very like the *Devil*, in that he does Miſchief with

all his Might. It is very obſervable, that God uſually gives *Satan* and his Inſtruments looſe Reins, ſome Time before a notable Manifeſtation of his *Mercy:* It was ſo before the Incarnation of our Lord; it was ſo alſo before the *Reformation* from *Popery*; and it will be much more ſo before that happy *Jubilee* of the Church comes, which is the Scope of this Text. The Lord is pleaſed to do ſo, 1. That his Enemies may be the more ripened for the *Vials* of his Fury, which we ſee in the Trumpets; for God under them puniſheth *Babylon* with Sin, and then with hot Wrath under the Vials. 2. That the Wicked may be perfectly without Excuſe, and be obliged to juſtify God in their own Damnation. 3. That the *Deliverance* expected may be the more apparent to be of God, and the Church may have no Room to aſcribe any Thing to herſelf. 4. That theſe Steps of his Mercy and Juſtice may keep his People in due Fear.

III. Emblem, which flows from the other two, is of *Smoke*; *And there aroſe a Smoke out of the Pit, like the Smoke,* &c. Here we are to view the Cauſe, and its Effect.

1. The Cauſe, *A Smoke like the Smoke of a Furnace.* Smoke is ſometimes taken in a very good Senſe in Scripture; but when it is a Smoke from Hell, there can be nothing good in it. It is indeed uſed to expreſs the terrible Judgments of God againſt the Wicked, *Gen.* xix. 28. *Lo, the Smoke of the Country went up as the Smoke of a Furnace.* And ſo indeed it is to be taken here: Only this is not like that, an exterminating Stroke, yet it is ripening; for here God is giving up *Babylon* to herſelf, to work Wickedneſs with Greedineſs, and even to let her feel Pain in her Sin; for this ſeems to be the Fumes of that heretical *Star* we found blazing before, but now ſmoking. It is compared to the *Smoke of a Furnace,* to ſhew the Violence and Thickneſs of it; for the Smoke of a Furnace is a great deal groſſer than any other. Nor does it want Reaſon to compare theſe *damnable Errors* to *Smoke*; 1. Becauſe as Smoke ſeems to promiſe Heat, yet there is none in it; ſo Error and Superſtition may feign Zeal and Love to God, but they have nothing of them. 2. *Smoke is ill for the Eyes,* Prov. x. 26. ſo are theſe to the Underſtanding. 3. Smoke is a vaniſhing Thing. 4. Smoke may obſtruct the *Sun* from our Eyes, but it cannot tarniſh the *Sun*; ſo Error may hide Truth, but it cannot injure it. 5. Smoke comes always from *Fire*; ſo Error flows from God's Wrath and Diſpleaſure.

2. The Effect of it, *The Sun and the Air were darkned,* &c. We are certainly to take Sun here as before: Theſe Confuſions will raiſe a Cloud upon the *Glory* of *Antichriſt.* It is no ſtrange Thing to ſee one Error obſcure another; for if the latter be better contrived, as commonly they are, then they put to the Bluſh theſe of old Standing, who have leſs of Art in their Conſtruction: This then ſeems to foretell, there will a new Spawn ariſe out of *Babylon,* of a finer Contexture than what has yet appeared; and as all Conſtitutions are afraid of looſing a Buckle, ſo will ſhe, leſt the whole Frame moulder to Pieces. It is added, the *Air will be darkned.* By which, I find ſome underſtand *Religion,* but they have no Warrant for it: It is true, it will be hard to eſtabliſh a Senſe; but, all Things conſidered, it may ſignify *Senſe and Reaſon*: So that the laſt Error of *Antichriſt* will be worſe than the firſt; as was ſaid before, *Evil Men and Seducers wax worſe and worſe.* This ſeems to threaten, the Productions of theſe Times will not only thwart the true Principles of Religion, which theſe never cared to maintain, but they even affront common Senſe and Reaſon: I own there are not a few Errors of this Nature too much encouraged now in the World, but worſe are ſtill a-coming.

IV. Emblem, which compleats the Types of this Trumpet, *There came Locuſts out of the Smoke.* We may be very eaſy whether this *Smoke* hatched the *Locuſts,* according to ſome; or were as a *Vehicle* to carry them up, as we ſee Smoke does light Things, according to others: However, by the Means of the *Smoke* the Locuſts got out of *Hell,* and came upon the Earth. We have given the Senſe of *Earth* before, and here the *Men of the Earth* are oppoſed to theſe who are *ſealed on their Foreheads.* We are therefore only a little to conſider the Nature of this Creature, called a *Locuſt,* Græcè ἀκρίς; Latinè, *Locuſta*; Anglicè, *Locuſt* or *Graſhopper*: It has the *Greek* Name from the Tops of Plants on which it feeds; the *Latine* Name is from the Dryneſs it brings to the Herb, &c. it feeds on, and from its dry and Shelly Skin; its *Engliſh* Deſignation is from its Motion, becauſe it rather *leaps* or *hops,* than flies. The Sons of *Medicine* have two Things meant by *Locuſt* or ἀκρίς; one is an Herb not common in theſe cold Climes, but next to our *Aſparagus* (which ſome think was the *Baptiſt*'s Food) while it is ſaid, *He lived on Locuſts and wild Hony*: But to be ſure there is no Alluſion to this Herb here. It ſignifies alſo a little *Animal,* too little to be ranged among Birds, and too big to be liſted among Flies: It is deſcribed from its Shapes to have an Head like a Horſe, two long Legs before, and in the Middle two little Wings, which

which aſſiſts with its Legs, rather to jump than fly, with a long Tail behind; from all this we call them Graſhoppers. They are but ſmall with us, but Hiſtorians tell us there are prodigious large ones in *Aſia*, and other Places: Some make them two or three Inches round in the Body, and five or ſix long; but *Pliny* ſays, They are near as many Feet. It was clean under the Law, *Lev.* xi. 22. and of more Sorts than one, but *all of them might be eaten.*

Beſides theſe Locuſts, there were extraordinary ones, which made one of the *Plagues* on *Egypt*, and to which this may allude, *Exod.* x. 14. *Before them there were no ſuch Locuſts as they, neither after them ſhall be ſuch.* They are ſaid to have *Crowns on their Heads*, Nahum iii. 17. But theſe ſeem to be more extraordinary ſtill, tho' they are only typical, and are deſigned to repreſent a Sett of Men ſhall ſometime appear in the World, and be one of the heavieſt Plagues from God has been before them. It is no ſtrange Thing in Scripture, to find numerous and ſtrong Enemies deſigned *Locuſts* and *Caterpillars*, as by the Prophet *Joel*, Chap. i. 2, *&c.*

3 —— And unto them was given Power, as the Scorpions of the Earth have Power.

Here we have the *Commiſſion* of the *Locuſts*, but ſtill in a *prophetical Strain*, and by a Compariſon to *the Scorpions of the Earth.* The Reaſon of this Difference to be ſure is, becauſe there are more Sorts of *Scorpions* than one; but *Earth* here is not to be oppoſed to *Heaven*, for there is nothing that hurts there. But we are informed by the Learned, who have made it their Buſineſs to enquire after the Nature of theſe *Creatures* mentioned in *Scripture*, that there are no leſs than three Sorts of *Scorpions*; One that *flies* in the Air like Fowls, and is deſigned a *flying* Scorpion: Another that *ſwims* in the Water, eſpecially large Rivers, and is a Sort of *Fiſh*: The third is called the *Land-ſcorpion*, and is beſt known of all the three, which could neither *fly* nor *ſwim*; of this Sort no doubt our Text ſpeaks: Its Name is the ſame in moſt Languages from the *Greek*; it is thought to come from σκορπίζω, *to ſcatter*, becauſe this Kind of Serpent *ſcatters its Poiſon* from a Sting in its Tail, wherever it goes, ſo that neither Man, Beaſt, nor Plant eſcapes its Venom. It ſeems to be a very groundleſs Conjecture in theſe who tell us, This was that *Serpent* that deceived our *Firſt Parents*; for the Curſe of that Serpent, and no doubt of all its Kind, *was to go on its Belly*: Whereas this is reported to have *eight Feet*, and two Arms, whereby it ſeizes its proper Food; it is of an *oval* Figure, and therefore ſaid to reſemble *an Egg*, Luke xi. 12. it has two *little Eyes*, and looks very mild-like in the Face, but has a poiſonable Sting in its Tail; and ſo it is made an Emblem of fair but deceitful Perſons, according to the old Proverb, *Scorpio eſt blanda facie, ſed cauda pungit occulte.* It is further noted about *Scorpions*, That their *Poiſon* is not *ſenſible* at firſt, nay, nor for ſome Days after, but then it kindles a deadly Fever in the Body. It is a Sort of *Serpent* which abounds in hot Countries, as it did in that Wilderneſs through which the *Iſraelites* travelled; for it is ſaid, *Deut.* viii. 15. *In the Wilderneſs were fiery Serpents and Scorpions.* It is evident then, that all the Power theſe Perſons have will be for Miſchief; and yet they can do more of that than God permits, for we find them bounded: Which brings to the *third.*

4 And it was commanded them, that they ſhould not hurt the Graſs of the Earth, neither any green Thing, neither any Tree: But only thoſe Men which have not the Seal of God in their Foreheads.

5 And to them it was given that they ſhould not kill them, but that they ſhould be tormented five Months: And their Torment was as the Torment of a Scorpion when he ſtriketh a Man.

The Limitation of their Power is threefold, 1. As to the Object. 2. As to the Meaſure. 3. As to the Duration or Continuance.

I. Theſe *Locuſts* are limited as to the Object of their Spite, *v.* 4. and this Limitation is both negative and poſitive: They are forbid to *meddle injuriouſly* with ſome Things, and have others *at their Will.*

The *Negative* we have in three Expreſſions, *Graſs, green Things, and the Trees.* Here we have a notable Difference betwixt theſe Locuſts and the *Egyptian Locuſts*, of whom it is ſaid, *Exod.* x. 15. *They did eat every Herb, and all the Fruit of the Trees, and there remained not any green Thing.* Some contend all this is to be taken

in a moſt literal Senſe; but I have a few Things to oppoſe to this; 1. All own the Locuſts are figurative, How then can we make theſe Things of a literal Meaning? If theſe *Locuſts* be Men, what can their Plot be againſt Herbs and Trees, unleſs we were to underſtand a martial Army, who deſtroy the Corns and Graſs while they go a-foraging? But this will not hold: Nay, and 'tis owned on all Hands, they are not a regular Army, in a warlick Manner to come upon the Saints of God, but are to do their Buſineſs otherwiſe, as we ſhall hear afterwards. 2. What Oppoſition can we in Reaſon ſtate betwixt the *Reprobate*, and theſe *three Things*? Or, allow this *literally*, What can be meant by theſe who *want the Seal of God*? For to be ſure we muſt take the ſeveral Parts of the Text in the ſame Senſe: And if we take them that are *not ſeaied*, in Oppoſition to theſe who are *ſealed*, as we heard *Chap.* vii. then by theſe three, *the Graſs, green Things, and Trees*, we are to mean the *Sealed*; and this is owned by the moſt ſound of Interpreters. I ſhall therefore conſider this *Inhibition* God ſerves againſt them, in theſe Particulars, as they ly in the Text.

1. We have the Interdiction, *It was commanded they ſhould not hurt*, originally, *It was ſaid unto them*, &c. This was a ſovereign Word, yea, of ſuch an Energy, as the firſt *Fiat* was; ſo that, after this Word, it was out of their Power: And the Thing interdicted is, *They ſhould not hurt*, or, *they ſhould do them no Injuſtice*, which was their natural Inclination; but herein they are reſtrained, for *God reſtrains the Wrath of Man*. God, that ſet Limits to the raging Sea, and is able to give Laws to the proud Billows thereof, is as powerful againſt the Children of Pride; and who can diſobey, when the Sovereign of all iſſues out his Orders?

2. We have the Things interdicted, which they were not to touch, *The Graſs of the Earth, any green Thing, and any Tree*. I ſee not how we can fetch the Meaning of this from *Chap.* viii. 7. becauſe there 'tis ſpoke of the *Enemies* of the Lord's People; but here we are certainly to underſtand all the *Lord's Sealed*: Tho', if we ſhould take it in the ſame Senſe, I ſee no Inconveniency to follow; for then it will comprehend all the Members of the viſible Church, in the ſame State and Capacity we found them under the Dominion of *Babylon*. Yet, I am ready to believe, ſomething further, and *inſtructive too*, may be found in this Expreſſion, which I ſhall notice in theſe Particulars, 1. The *Graſs* may point at their Humility, Unanimity, and Variety of their Stations; for all theſe (as well as other) Things may be evidently ſeen in Graſs. 2. The *Greenneſs* may denote their radical Sap, Flower, and Growth; for in all theſe Terms have the Increaſe of different Believers been denoted to us in Scripture. 3. By *Trees*, their Strength, Stability and Firmneſs: But yet, if any incline to underſtand by *Graſs*, the female and lower Sett of Chriſtians; and by *Green*, theſe who are in a more flouriſhing and proſperous Condition; and by *Trees*, well grown and tall Believers; I ſhall not oppoſe it, becauſe not inconſiſtent with the Analogy of Faith. But, I think we may not paſs the Extenſion of the Prohibition in the Word πᾶν, which is twice expreſt, to ſhew the Strictneſs of the Command: For it is noticed amongſt the *Greeks*, That as two *Negatives* make a very ſtrong *Denial*, ſo two *Poſitives* are a very firm and ſtrong *Aſſertion*: And therefore, to ſum up the whole of theſe three, theſe *Locuſts* were forbid to meddle with *any of the Church* and People of God, of whatever Degree; than which, I ſee not any Inhibition can be more extenſive than this, in all its Parts: And of Courſe, we may believe this exeems the Church from all Harm from them.

Poſitively, *But only thoſe Men who have not the Seal of God in their Foreheads*. Tho' this, as to its Expreſſion, is negative yet, as to its Signification, it is moſt poſitive; for here, we are ſure the whole Speech is of Men: And by *the Graſs, the green Thing, and the Trees*, are meant Believers who are ſealed, *Chap.* vii. 3, 4. and by a plain Conſequent, by the *Unſealed* we are to underſtand the *Reprobate*. But then if it be ſaid, If the *Locuſts* are Men notourly againſt God, and theſe who want the *Seal* are Men no leſs eſtranged to Chriſt, it ſeems *Satan's Kingdom is divided*, and one Part of it fights againſt another? To this I anſwer, I grant both; for by this Time *Satan's Kingdom will be brought to a very low Ebb*, and upon the Brink of Ruin. 2. There are many in the World go under the Name of *God's People*, who yet are nothing akin to them; and ſo this Mark will be a Characteriſtick at that Time: For here are to be meant only true Believers, who ſhall eſcape their Rage.

II. Thoſe Locuſts are limited as to the Meaſure or Degree of their Malice againſt them over whom they had got Power; for, tho' the Reprobate is given to them, yet they cannot go ſuch a Length with them, as their Malice might puſh them. This is very expreſs, being

1. Negatively expreſſed, *And to them it was given not to kill them*: So that their Lives were ſecure; which plainly ſays, theſe Locuſts were not martial or warlick Men,

for

ſor we never heard of a great Number of Men given up to the Power of ſuch, that all eſcaped; and yet here it muſt be certainly believed, elſe it will not be poſſible to make Senſe of the Words: And further, from this it follows, all the Devils in Hell cannot reach the Life of one Man, however wicked, if God do not give Permiſſion. This alſo may lead in to the Knowledge of theſe *Locuſts*, that they are to be more deſtructive to the *Faith*, than to *Perſons*; which, by the By, alſo proves this *Star* to be much allied to the *Star* in the *third Trumpet*, for they rather imbitter the Minds, than kill the Perſons.

2. Poſitively, *But that they ſhould torment them.* This Word, ſome think, properly expreſſeth the *Pangs of a Woman in Travail*, tho' I can find no Ground for this: Two Things I am ſure of, 1. That it ſignifies the *Pains of the Damned in Hell*, which is more: And ſo the *Devils* ſaid, *Mat.* viii. 29. *Art thou come to torment us before the Time?* So that it is not a groundleſs Queſtion, if theſe Torments are the ſame as in Hell: And, if it be allowed, they will imagine then all this to be applied to a future State. But this will not do; for βάσανος properly ſignifies the Touch-ſtone, by which *Mineraliſts* diſtinguiſh betwixt falſe and true Metal, and, by an uſual *Metaphor*, ſignifies *Trial*; and ſo, a great many think, it ſhould be rendred here. I own, I never find it taken in this Senſe in Scripture, but always for a very *terrible* Pain and Affliction, as before; and commonly in Scripture it is uſed to expreſs the *Torments of Hell.* 2. Theſe Torments are compared to the Torments of a *Scorpion*, as we heard before, and will further hear afterwards.

III. Theſe Locuſts are limited to the Time, wherein they had Power to torment, *For five Months*; this is repeated, *v.* 10. Some think, it ſhould be underſtood *literally*; but then, it muſt be ſaid, it will be but a ſhort Plague: Yea, were it Fire and Sword to run through ſo much of the Earth as is inhabited by Chriſt's Enemies, the Rumour of it would almoſt, if not wholly, conſume as much Time. Others tell us, we are to underſtand preciſely 300 Years by this; but this is a very bold Turn in *Mede*, to ſerve his own Scheme. Some would have this to be the ſame with 1260 Years, which I think all are obliged to maintain, who ſay, *Antichriſt* was to take his Riſe under this *Trumpet*: However, it is plain, he is much older than this. Others, again, think it is a bare Alluſion to the Seaſon of *Locuſts*, who come in *April*, and go off in *September*; and ſo the whole Meaning is, They will continue their own Time. But this Opinion muſt either fall in with the literal, and then they are to ſubſiſt only five Months; or elſe they are to underſtand *their Time*, for that Time God has allotted them, as I think the Throng of Expoſitors point at: And then, it is juſt as much as to ſay, there is here an *indefinite* Time meant, tho' expreſt by a *definite*; which is much more honeſt in theſe who contend for an indefinite Number, under all, or moſt of theſe condeſcended on in this Prophecy. Yet this Opinion here is hamper'd with as many Difficulties as any where elſe. And I add this Reaſon to it, If all, or moſt of the Numbers be indefinite, it had been enough for the Spirit of God to have kept one Number for all Occaſions; which we ſee, however, is not done. And, to be ſure, ſome Reaſon is to be given, why there is five Months here, and forty two Months in another Place: And, to ſay there is to be noticed the Proportion betwixt the Numbers, the Strait is the ſame; for, what Proportion can there be betwixt an *Indefinite* and an *Indefinite*, more than betwixt an *Infinite* and an *Infinite*? The laſt Opinion about this I mention is, of thoſe who contend every *Day* is to be taken for a *Year*, and ſo five Months containing 150 Days, at 30 Days in the Month, this muſt extend to 150 Years. The Reaſonableneſs of ſo doing we ſhall hear afterwards; but the Application of this Viſion is not one Whit more facilitate hereby: For, if *Antichriſt* roſe now, the Time is too ſhort for him; if the *Jeſuites*, as many contend, then they are alſo wrong. But more of this afterwards.

6 And in thoſe Days ſhall Men ſeek Death, and ſhall not find it; and ſhall deſire to die, and Death ſhall flee from them.

This, with what is in the Cloſe of *v.* 5. diſcovers to us what Miſchief they will do, tho' limited; which ſeems to repreſent to us a moſt dolorous Condition: However, this *Irking of Life* has ſometimes fallen to the Share of God's own People, as we ſee in the Caſe of *Job*; for he was one of theſe *which long'd for Death and it came not; and digg'd for it more than for hid Treaſures, but could not find it*, Job iii. 21. But the Caſe differs mightily betwixt the Longing of a godly Perſon under Affliction, and the Deſires of the Graceleſs; for the *Believer* knows all his *Miſery* will be over at Death, and his Deſire is with Submiſſion to the Will of God: Neither of which can be ſaid of the Reprobate. However, herein we may obſerve theſe few Things, to point out their Trouble, 1. That it was very ſharp, and ſenſible, even to Exceſs. 2. They had no

Sight of any Evaſion from it. 3. They had as little Comfort under it. And, 4. They were deſperate, and the Senſe of this Expreſſion is, *Let them be free of the preſent Trouble, come next what will*; for this is the Thought of all ſuch mad Perſons.

7 And the Shapes of the Locuſts *were* like unto Horſes prepared unto Battle, and on their Heads *were* as it were Crowns of Gold; and their Faces *were* as the Faces of Men.

8 And they had Hair as the Hair of Women, and their Teeth were as the *Teeth* of Lions.

9 And they had Breaſt-plates as it were Breaſt-plates of Iron, and the Sound of their Wings was as the Sound of Chariots of many Horſes running to Battle.

10 And they had Tails like unto Scorpions, and there were Stings in their Tails; and their Power was to hurt Men five Months.

In this Deſcription of the *Locuſts*, it would appear they are very extraordinary. The general Deſcription is very ſtrange, while they are ſaid to be *like unto Horſes prepared unto Battle*; this is plainly fetched from the Prophet *Joel*, Chap. ii. 4. where it is ſaid, *The Appearance of them is as the Appearance of Horſes, and as Horſemen.* Yet this is ſpoken of thoſe he had deſigned *Locuſts*, Joel i. 4. We may not think ever there were Graſhoppers or Locuſts as big as Horſes: But here is a notable Difference betwixt theſe Locuſts and all others; for it is ſaid of ordinary Locuſts, they are very timorous, and frighted eaſily; ſo it is ſaid, *Job* xxxix. 20. *Canſt thou make him afraid like a Graſhopper?* But theſe Graſhoppers are as fiery as train'd and harneſſed Horſes. But we have further theſe Steps of the Shape of the Locuſts to conſider, 1. About their Head. 2. About their Middle. And, 3. About their Tail.

1. They are deſcribed in their *Heads*, the chief Part of them; and about this we have theſe Things ſaid, 1. *They had as it were Crowns of Gold* upon them; this we heard formerly, all Locuſts have Crowns, but not Crowns of Gold: So that this muſt point either at their Dignity or Succeſs, or both. 2. Their Countenances are ſaid to *be like the Faces of Men*; this may point at their *Affableneſs*, and apparent Diſcretion, by which they would gain upon the World. Of this we ſpoke before, *Chap.* iv. 7. 3. *Their Hair is ſaid to be as the Hair of Women*; this is generally thought to reſpect their Delicateneſs, and the inſinuating Methods they will uſe to gain upon the World, as Women uſe their Hair as Intanglements to their Lovers: So the Prophet tells us of *the Womens well ſet Hair*, Iſa. iii. 24. 4. *Their Teeth are the Teeth of Lions.* We have the ſame Account of the *Iſraelites* Enemies, *Joel* i. 6. *A Nation is come up upon my Land, ſtrong, and without Number, whoſe Teeth are the Teeth of a Lion*, i. e. hard, and ſtrong, and ſharp, and greedy of Prey; to point out their covered Cruelty, under the Mask of deceitful Kindneſs: So that this will be a moſt ſubtil and malicious, tho' not a deadly Enemy.

2. There is an Account about their *Middle*, v. 9. in theſe, 1. *They had Breaſt-plates as Breaſt-plates of Iron*, which is very ſtrong for Defence; ſo that they were well fortified. Some think the Meaning to be, They were hard-hearted, and without all Senſe of Shame or Honeſty. 2. *The Sound of their Wings was as the Sound of many Chariots.* This ſeems alſo to be from *Joel*, Chap. ii. 5. *Like the Noiſe of Chariots on the Tops of Mountains ſhall they leap.* They will then have a fearful Clutter, and both terrify and aſtoniſh.

3. We have an Account of their *Tail*, v. 10. where two Things are ſaid of this *Tail*, 1. *It is like a Scorpion's*, i. e. in Length, Greatneſs, and the Multitude of its Links or *Verlebræ*. 2. Like them it has alſo a Sting, wherewith they do Miſchief. This may be an Emblem of their Plots, and inſnaring Methods; that they will do moſt Harm, when, and where leaſt is to be reaſonably feared of their Armies.

11 And they had a King over them, which is the Angel of the bottomleſs Pit, whoſe Name in the Hebrew Tongue is *Abaddon*, but in the Greek Tongue hath his Name *Apollyon.*

Here is another notable *Difference* betwixt theſe and the true *Locuſts*, who are ſaid to *have no King*, Prov. xxx. 27. This King of theirs is variouſly deſcribed, 1. From his Nature, *The Angel of the bottomleſs Pit.* We would notice, tho' our Tranſlation be the

the ſame with *v.* 1. yet the *Greek* differs; for there is but one Word here, whereas there are two before; and this may be rendred the *Deep* or *Hell*, which I proved to be its moſt ordinary Signification. But here all are not agreed about him: Some would have him to be the ſame with the *Star*, v. 1. Some, again, incline to make him ſome principal Man on Earth, who, from his Work, is called an *Angel* or *Meſſenger* of Hell. I do think, they are neareſt it, who reckon him *Satan*, or the Prince of *Devils*, who acts (in a moſt imperceptible Manner) theſe Locuſts. And this I think the more to be regarded, becauſe he is called the *Angel Satan*, 2 Cor. xii. 7. tho' our Tranſlators, without any Reaſon, have turned it there, *The Angel of Satan*. And, we are ſure, he leads Captive at his Will the Veſſels of Wrath. 2. Beſides, this King has two Names, one *Hebrew*, and another *Greek*: A plauſible Reaſon of this is offered by one, That he will be equally an *Enemy* to *Jew* and *Gentile*; And this ſhews plainly, he deſigns Miſchief to them both, and will effectuate it ſo far as his Permiſſion runs. *Abaddon* an *Hebrew* Word, as the Text tells, which ſignifies Deſtruction or Perdition; for the manifold Turns upon the Word, they are more curious than ſolid, and ſo I paſs it. The other Name is *Apollyon*, a *Greek* Word, of the ſame Import with the former one, a *Deſtroyer*; unleſs we make this Difference with ſome, that he is deſtroyed himſelf, as the Force of the *Hebrew* Word bears, and ſtudies to deſtroy others, according to the Meaning of his *Greek* Name. It ſeems to be no ill Conjecture of theſe, who would have this to be the ſame with *Apollo*, whom the *Heathen* worſhip; and ſay, That he will revive in the World a great many old *Heathen* Principles. [Dr. *Hamond*.]

As to the Application of this, the Learned have a great Variety of Thoughts: Some would have it literally meant; Yet they forget themſelves when they make the *Star* a *good Angel*, and the *Locuſts* to be all *Devils*; and ſo, I think, we may neglect them.

Others, who apply it to the *Jews*, can have no Hearing from what we advanced before, that that Nation was expoſed to the Wrath of God before this Viſion: And ſo, with little Labour, theſe who apply this to the Ruin of the *Roman* Empire, by the *Goths* and *Vandals*; while others mean the *Saracens* thereby, and ſome the *Turks*, who defeat the *Saracens*. But, from the Strain of the Prophecy, it would appear all theſe are of too old a Date; and that which is meant hereby, muſt be a great deal later. I only notice theſe Opinions.

1. Such as would have the *Jeſuites* to be meant thereby, whoſe Riſe they date from the Year 1540, when Pope *Paul* III. did raiſe them to all that Height they have ſince had, he having well diſcern'd how ſerviceable theſe religious *Janizaries* are to the *Roman* See: But then, they ſhould have fallen in the Year 1690; but how far theſe have overſhot themſelves, is too plain to need any Refutation.

Another Opinion there is, much wider, but later, That we are to underſtand the whole *Romiſh Clergy, from the Pope*, whom they conſtitute the *fallen Star, to the meaneſt mendicant Friar*. I own, they have diſcovered a great deal of Thought about this, in applying every Part of the Viſion to that degenerate and apoſtate *Church*: Yet they are much ſtraitned about the Time of their Continuance; nor is it poſſible for them to rid their Feet about it; for, if the *Pope* be *Antichriſt*, as they maintain, then he is to continue forty two Months, whereas theſe Locuſts are to laſt preciſely five Months. Let us take theſe two Meaſures of Time in what Senſe we pleaſe, ſtill there is the Odds of 5 from 42. And ſo, without more ado, we may reject all; for, if any one Part of the Viſion thwart the given Senſe, to be ſure the Interpretation falls.

A laſt Notion I mention about it is of thoſe, who make theſe *Locuſts* the *School-Doctors*; this is more diverting, but no more ſatisfying than any of the reſt. There was indeed a Smoke about them, and ſeveral other Things agreeable enough; but, when all the Parts are examined, we cannot find that neceſſary Analogy, to admit it for an Expoſition.

I own, it is no leſs difficult to apply this than the others; and the Reaſon is the ſame, becauſe, I humbly conceive, it is to come, and when its Seaſon is, will be its own beſt Interpreter: But, it ſeems plain, it will take its Riſe from among the Enemies of the Church; and that they will create Trouble to the Church, but much more to her Enemies, whoſe great Abettor will be found to be the great Adverſary.

12 One Wo is paſt, and behold, there come two Woes more hereafter.

The only Difficulty about this Text is, Who had this Speech? Some tell us, The *Angel* that ſounded the *Trumpet*: But we do not find he ever ſpoke one Word in the Viſion, all his Work was to give the Alarm: And juſt ſo we ſee in all the reſt of the *Trumpets* before; For what was elſe conſequential to theſe Sounds, was all *emblematical* Viſion, the naked Account whereof *John* relates. Nor can I find, betwixt

the Sound of the *firſt* Trumpet and this, any Voice, except that of the *Angel* flying through the Midſt of Heaven, *Chap.* viii. 13. and proclaiming three Woes with a loud Voice. Now, I am ready to think, if another *Angel* had been employed here, the *Apoſtle*, who is very juſt to all the *Interlocutors*, would not failed to have given ſome Account of him, at leaſt told us he heard ſuch a Voice. That which I then take to be the Senſe of this Text is, *John*, when he had ſeen this Viſion following the Sound of the *Trumpet*, and upon the Back of the *flying Angel's* Voice, makes this Inference, One of the three denounced *Woes* is come, and ſo two more remain; which is to excite the Church ſeriouſly to conſider, both what is paſt, and what is to come. Upon the whole, I cannot ſee any Myſtery comprehended in this, nor am I fond to fiſh for new ones; that we have ſo many among our Hands, we cannot eſcape.

TRUMPET VI.

THE Contents of this Trumpet reaches from *v.* 13. of this 9th Chapter, to the 14th *v.* of the eleventh Chapter; but each of the Chapters produceth new Emblems. As for theſe Debates, whether the two following Chapters are Viſions about new and diverſe Emergents from what is contained in this Trumpet, or not, ſhall be afterwards conſidered.

I am now to view what is contained in the ſubſequent Part of this Chapter; where I notice, by Way of Method, theſe few Things; 1. We have a Voice upon the Back of the Sound, with the Contents thereof, which is the Emblem, *v.* 13, 14. 2. A ready Obedience given to that Voice, *v.* 15. 3. A diſtinct View of this terrible Viſion, as the ſame appeared to the Apoſtle, together with their Efficacy, to *v.* 20. 4. The Iſſue of this terrible Judgment, in the laſt two Verſes.

13 And the ſixth Angel ſounded, and I heard a Voice from the four Horns of the Golden Altar, which is before God,

14 Saying to the ſixth Angel which had the Trumpet, Looſe the four Angels which are bound in the great River Euphrates.

Here we have a commanding Voice, that reached *John's* Ear; where is to be noticed, 1. Whence the Voice came. 2. To whom it was directed. 3. What it required.

I. Whence the Voice came, *I heard a Voice from the four Horns of the golden Altar, which is before God.* Where we conſider,

1. The Voice; *A Voice*, ſays our Tranſlation, but in the *Greek* it is φονὴ μία, *one Voice*; which, to be ſure, has an Emphaſis, tho', I own, it be no eaſy Thing to explain it, for *John* had heard many Voices, and ſome of them oftner than once; but, whether this was any of theſe Voices he had heard before, is not ſaid: Nor can we pull this in to be the *firſt Voice*, which *John* heard, *Chap.* i. and afterwards, *Chap.* iv. 1. for that was no Doubt the Voice of Chriſt. I doubt not but this will be found to be auguſt; Yet I would not ſqueeze a Word to expreſs any Thing againſt its true Senſe.

2. The Voice is ſaid to come *from the four Horns of the golden Altar.* We heard of this *Golden Altar* before, *Chap.* viii. 3. It was the Altar of *Incenſe*, where the *Angel offered up the Prayers of the Saints.* We heard nothing of the Horns of this Altar before, tho' we are ſure *Moſes* by the Command of God gave it them; and the Blood of the *yearly Atonement* was put upon the Horns of this Altar, *Exod.* xxx. 2, 10. So that this ſeems to be another Part of the Anſwer of theſe Prayers, under the *fifth Seal*, and which were perfum'd with the Incenſe of Chriſt's *Merits*, Chap. viii. 3. The other five Trumpets contained a gracious Anſwer thereto: But this ſeems to be more full, eſpecially if we add what follows under the Sound of the other Trumpets.

3. This Voice comes from the *four Horns*; not from any one of them, nor from the intermediate Space betwixt, elſe it would be ſaid from between the four Horns. Now, the *Blood* ſprinkled upon theſe *four Horns*, was *atoning for the whole Congregation*; to ſhew us that Chriſt is the Truth of this *Altar*, and its *Horns* the only Atonement for all the World: And therefore, *Chap.* viii. 3. it is ſaid, Chriſt offered the Prayers *of all the Saints.* The Voice coming this Way, ſays, it is not the Voice of Chriſt, at leaſt *originally*, but the Voice of the *Father*, in Anſwer to theſe Prayers the *Mediator* offered up. And that this Voice came from the *Horns*, is to aſſure us that all Prayers, directed to God through Chriſt, are anſwered the ſame Way; which is every Time an Acquieſcing in the Mediation of Chriſt.

4. This

4. This Altar is ſaid to be *before God*; which declares the Incenſe-Altar to be ſo ſituate, as is recorded, *Exod.* xxx. 6. *Thou ſhalt put it before the Vail, that is by the Ark of the Teſtimony, before the Mercy-ſeat:* Declaring to us, the Satisfaction made by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is ever in the View of God, for his Acceptation of Believers. This Voice then is both an *awful Voice*, becauſe the Voice of God; and a well-grounded Order, becauſe through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

II. To whom this Voice is directed, *To the ſixth Angel which had the Trumpet.* This *Angel* is honoured with a Piece of more Employment than the other *five*, who had nothing to do, but ſound; for this *Angel*, after he has *ſounded*, receives further Orders. As for theſe Pieces of Curioſity many burden the Text with, as, What was this *Angel*? The Text ſays, He was One of the *Seven* that *had* the *Trumpets*; and more cannot be ſaid with Safety. 2. Why did God direct Orders to him, and to none of the other five? It is Anſwer enough, God may employ which of his Servants he will, and when he pleaſeth. 3. What is repreſented by this *Angel*? I anſwer, He ſhews *John* the Viſion; but who will be employed when the Myſtery of this Viſion is to be unravelled to be the Executioners thereof, God only knows. But I meddle with none of theſe Things; we muſt not be wiſe above what is written: Yet the next Part of the Text may give ſome Light to this.

III. The Orders given by the Voice to this Angel, *Looſe the four Angels which are bound in the great River* Euphrates. Where we ſhall view the *Object*, and then the *Act*; that if poſſible, from many jarring Opinions about this, we may attain to ſome Thing, at leaſt probable, about the Senſe of theſe Words, which may be of Uſe afterwards.

The Object directs us to conſider theſe Things, 1. The Character of theſe Perſons, *Angels.* 2. Their Number, *Four.* 3. Their Condition, *Bound.* And, 4. The Place where, in the *River* Euphrates.

1. The general Character of this Object, *Angels.* It is evident theſe are not the Four mentioned *Chap.* vii. 1. for theſe were not bound, but did bind or reſtrain the Winds: Nor does it appear but ſomething further is to be lookt at here than pure *Spirits*, whether good or bad, for theſe are only Emblems; but here, theſe ſeem to repreſent the *Executioners* of God's Will, and therefore have the Deſignation *Angels* beſtowed on them. This is the more probable, that in this ſame Viſion we have them deſigned *Armies of Horſemen*; a Name in no Propriety can be beſtowed upon *Pure Spirits*: And ſo I think it more agreeable to mean by them *Kings* or *Great Generals*, whom God will raiſe up as *Inſtruments*, bringing about this Piece of his Juſtice upon his Enemies, and the Enemies of his Church.

2. Their Number, *Four.* Some think this a definite for an indefinite Number; and are called *Four*, to anſwer to the four Corners of the Earth, becauſe they would lanch forth unto all Quarters. I own this Number is ſeveral Times ſo taken in Scripture, as, *Neh.* vi. 4. *They ſent unto me four Times after this Sort*, i. e. ſeveral Times. And again, *Amos* i. *For three Tranſgreſſions, and for four*, i. e. many. Yet it muſt be owned, it is often taken for a ſtrict Number: That they are named *Four* twice, ſeems to ſay much this Way. Again, we find the whole Number of the *Beaſt's Horns* to be *Ten*; and why may we not allow theſe to be *Four* of them, and the other *Six* to adhere to *Babylon*? But I ſhall not puſh this further *now*, it will be more proper on *Chap.* xvii.

3. Their Condition, *Bound.* This is a Word of ſeveral Significations in Scripture. Sometimes it is taken in a *Phyſical* Senſe, and ſo it ſignifies to be *in Chains*, or under Reſtraint or Confinement; in this Senſe it is taken by the Apoſtle, *Col.* iii. 14. *The Myſtery of Chriſt, for which I am in Bonds.* And, *Acts* xxiv. 27. *Felix left Paul bound.* Sometimes it is taken *morally* or in a *legal Senſe*, and it ſignifies to be engaged or obliged; as *the Woman that hath a Husband, is bound by the Law to her Husband*, Rom. vii. 2. And, *Art thou bound to a Wife?* &c. 1 *Cor.* vii. 27. I confeſs it is not eaſy to determine which of theſe two Senſes ſhould take Place here, ſeeing the Act of Looſing doth indifferently agree to either; and eſpecially, that many Expoſitors incline to the former. But that which encourages me to differ from them, is, that at leaſt a Part of *Antichriſt* is repreſented under the Type of a *black Horſe*, Rev. vi. 5. whoſe *Rider* is ſaid to *have a Yoke in his Hand*: Now, a *Yoke* not only binds the *Beaſts together*, but alſo all of them to the *Draught* or Work. And the Spirit of God, adhering to this Notion, may readily be thought to mean, theſe Potentates are yoked or obliged by ſome Tye or Oath of Fealty; which as long as they obſerved, there was no Trouble to *Babylon*; but as ſoon as they were eaſed of this Yoke, they would uſe their Liberty: And we will ſee afterwards, that the *Kings* of the Earth, who held their *Crowns* of the *Beaſt*, *will hate her, and burn her Fleſh with Fire.*

4. The Place where, *In the great River* Euphrates: In this Place theſe are ſaid to be bound. We would a little conſider this great *River*, which ſeems to deſerve the Name *Great*, rather from a Multitude of great Countries that it waſheth, and the great Tranſactions have been about it, than from its real Bulk, as if it were greater than any other. It is inded one of the greateſt in *Aſia*, and yet there are two, *Indus* and *Ganges*, are greater than it. *Geographers* tells us It takes its Riſe in *Armenia* the Greater, and waters many Countries from thence, till it fall in to the *Arabian* Sea. It is ſaid to be about 1000 Miles from its Springs to the Gulph of *Baſora*; and, before it join the *Tygris*, is not at the broadeſt Place a full Mile. It is the March betwixt *Syria* and *Perſia*, as the Countries are now bounded. It has the great Countries of *Natolia*, *Syria*, *Paleſtine* and *Arabia* on the Weſt-ſide; and on the Eaſt, *Tartary*, *Meſopotamia*, and *Perſia*.

This *River* is famous in Scripture for ſeveral Things, as, 1. It was one of the *four* Rivers that watered *Paradiſe*, and called the *fourth* in Order, *Gen.* ii. 14. 2. It was the Boundary of the *Land of Promiſe*, when firſt made over to *Abraham*, Gen. xv. 18. *Unto thy Seed have I given this Land, from the River of* Egypt, *unto the great River* Euphrates: And accordingly we find the Tribe of *Reuben inhabite the Weſt-Bank of it*, 1 Chron. v. 9. 3. The great City *Babylon*, which was juſtly reckoned the *Lady* of the World, ſtood upon this River; it was about 60 Miles in Circuit, and had a conſiderable Branch of the River that run through it.

The Countries about this River are no leſs famous in Civil Hiſtory for the moſt notable Exploits under the *Perſian*, *Grecian*, and *Roman* Monarchies, that ever the Sun beheld. It was the utmoſt Limits of the *Romiſh* Conqueſts. About this River alſo the *Turkiſh* Empire took its firſt Riſe, about the 12th or 13th Century.

But, when we have commended the River and adjacent Countries, we are not one whit nearer our Purpoſe as to the Senſe of the Prophecy; Tho' on all Hands it is agreed, that the Meaning of *Euphrates* will path the Way to all the reſt: And therefore we would endeavour to know what is meant by it.

A great many incline to take it literally, at leaſt not far therefrom, and ſo underſtand by it the *Mahometan*, or, according to others, the *Ottoman* or preſent *Turkiſh* Empire; but they differ: However, all Hands are at Work to make the Parts of their ſeveral Gloſſes hang together; And ſome of the greateſt Name among them tells, That by the *four Angels*, we are to mean the *four Sultanies* in this *Empire*. Mean while, I leave them to account for their Number, and reconcile their Thoughts with the moſt approven Hiſtories of that Monarchy. But this is not our Strait at the Time; for by their Scheme, in explicating it according to the Text, theſe Angels are to be independent one of another, and all of them from any other Power; and hereby they deſtroy the Influence of the *Yoke*: Which cannot agree to the *Sultanies* of *Aſia*, *Aleppo*, *Damaſcus*, and *Antioch*; for all of theſe depend upon the *Grand Sultan*, and are changed at his Pleaſure every three Years; yet we could count as many other *Sultanies*. And moreover, by what we have ſaid, it ſeems theſe Angels are to make a Revolt from theſe who bound them; and in this Caſe, they have a great many Queſtions to anſwer, as, Who bound theſe Angels? By whom were they looſed? For what End were they liberate? And what did they when delivered? All which, in my Opinion, are impoſſible for them, after they make them to continue as ſtedfaſt Friends to the *Mahometan* Intereſt after they are looſed, as they were before: Which will give Birth to a new Queſtion, Upon whom then did they wreck their Spite? For the two laſt Verſes prove it was not againſt the *Church of God*, tho' theſe Interpreters ſeem to point this Way. I have further to add, in whatever Senſe they take this, all they alledge will not meet with *Euphrates*; For, whether we allow them to be *Devils* or *Sultans*, they are far from this River; and much further from *Conſtantinople* the *Ottoman* Port: And thus they will be ſtraitned to prove them bound *at*, or *in* the great River *Euphrates*. Thus I have cut off the Struggles of all that contend for a literal Meaning, or a Meaning that is near to the literal.

Nor do I ſee how *Euphrates* can be taken literally, more than *Babylon*, which none, as far as I know, ever endeavoured to do; Yea, it would be idle, if any ſhould, ſeeing we are ſure *Babylon* was deſtroyed by *Cyrus*, many Centuries before this Viſion was written. Yet ſome tell us, That *Babylon* may be taken for *Antichriſt*, and *Euphrates* for ſome other Thing; which indeed is all I find a great Author ſay on this Point, and leaves us no Argument to anſwer; and therefore I add one againſt this *May-be*: All the Accounts we have in the Old Teſtament about *Euphrates*, is from this, That *Babylon* ſtood upon its Banks; yea, and more, was fortify'd by its Streams, as well as nouriſhed. And if any will adduce another Reaſon, after God made it the *March* of the *Children* of *Iſrael's Inheritance*, I ſhall make no more Noiſe; And I am ſure they'll grant me this, That *Babylon* became the Capitol of the *Chaldeans* long after this.

The

The Pſalmiſt will help us out with this, *Pſal.* cxxxvii. 1. *By the Rivers of* Babylon *we ſat down.* Here it is read *Rivers* in the plural Number, not becauſe there were more Rivers of the Name *Euphrates*, or that *Babylon* was ſituate upon any other River but this, elſe it would have ſaved their King a great deal of Charges: But, becauſe this River was branched out in ſeveral Canals about the City, of great Uſe and Note, ſome for its Defence, others to bring Merchandize of all Sorts to their very Doors, and plentifully ſupplying the Inhabitants in all their Straits; and ſome of them for watering the adjacent Fields; yet all the while it was but one River, ſo many Ways artfully diſpoſed of. Hence I infer, whatever we are to underſtand by *Babylon*, that great City, and grand Enemy of the *Church of God*, in a prophetical Senſe, we muſt make an Allowance for the Signification of this *River* to be ſomewhat is as neceſſary to ſpiritual *Babylon*, as this River was to literal *Babylon*; elſe we will force the ſeveral Parts of the Emblem to claſh together: Yet are we not preſently to either underſtand *Rome* by *Babylon*, nor *Tyber* by *Euphrates*, as ſome would have us; for *Rome* is not the *ſpiritual Babylon*, as we ſhall afterwards prove; or, if it were, *Tyber* does not ſo many Offices for *Rome*, as *Euphrates* did for *Babylon*: And therefore, in one Word, by this River, we are to mean whatever both ſtrengthens and aliments the *myſtical Babylon*, as much as *Euphrates* did the *literal Babylon*. But the Reaſon of this will not be evident, till we come to the ſixth Vial.

Theſe Angels then may be preſumed to be ſuch Tutelary Powers, as reckon it now their Duty and Intereſt to ſupport that Mother of Harlots, and who attend upon this very Thing; which will be clearer from the Text, if we allow ourſelves in that little Bit of Liberty our Tranſlators at other Times uſe with the Prepoſition ἐπί, to turn it *at*, inſtead of *in*, as a great many think ſhould be alſo ſo turned here; as we find a Neceſſity of altering it in that Paſſage of the Apoſtle, *Heb.* ix. 26. *But now once in the End of the World*, i. e. about the End, or at ſome Diſtance from the End of the World: It is the ſame Conſtruction with our Text.

The Act, *Looſe*; which we have a hundred Times over in Scripture, ſignifying the Diſſolving of Obligations. I only mention theſe two plain Inſtances, *Iſa.* lviii. 6. *Is not this the Faſt that I have choſen, to looſe the Bands of Wickedneſs, and undo the heavy Burdens?* And that from our Lord, *Matth.* xvi. 19. *Whatſoever thou ſhalt looſe on Earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven.* So that, whatever be the Senſe of this Prophecy, I am ready to think the literal Expoſition of *Euphrates* will give little Light: But this figurative Explication has not only the Analogy of Faith from concurring Scriptures to eſtabliſh it, but lets in to a moſt plain, eaſy, and unforced Meaning of the Viſion; and will be of Uſe to open up many other Parts of this Prophecy. And by the *Angel* that *looſes*, we may underſtand the *Goſpel-miniſtry*, who, in a ſcriptural Way, ſhews convincingly the Nullity of the Obligations ſuch Powers are come under to ſupport *Antichriſt*, and encourage Idolaters.

15 And the four Angels were looſed, which were prepared for an Hour, and a Day, and a Month, and a Year, for to ſlay the third Part of Men.

In this Execution of the Orders, we are to notice, 1. The exact Anſwer to the Command. 2. The Caſe of theſe looſed. 3. The Deſign of both.

1. The *Execution* exactly anſwers to the *Command*, which we had, *Looſe*: And here, in Obedience thereto, *the*, or *theſe four Angels were looſed.* It is not ſaid the *Angel* did it, tho' no doubt they run at his Command; but the Apoſtle renders it paſſively, either becauſe he did not ſee the Action, or it could not be ſeen, if it was, as we ſaid, a diſengaging them; Or, becauſe the Efficacy was ſuch, he concluded, and juſtly, there was more of the *Commander's Power*, than of the *Inſtrument's*, in the Work: For it is a great Truth, *Paul may plant, Apollos may water, but it is God that giveth the Increaſe.*

2. The Caſe of theſe thus looſed, They were *prepared for an Hour*, &c. It will be needleſs to enquire by whom? No doubt inſtrumentally by the *Angel* who looſed them, but efficaciouſly by the *Author of the Voice*, for they could not prepare themſelves. The Nature of this Preparation may be had, partly from the Command of God, and ſo to be prepared, is to be diſpoſed to render a ready and cheerful Obedience; for all previous Diſpoſitions, either for advancing God's Work, or defeating that of his Enemies, come allenarly from himſelf: If Chriſt ſend his *Diſciples* for an *Aſs Colt*, they'll find him ready, and the People willing. And partly from their Work, *To kill*: And ſo, when it is ſaid they were *prepared*, the Meaning is, They had not only *Will*,

but *Skill*; and were furniſhed with fit Tools, the Inſtruments of Death, as we hear afterwards. There is alſo mention made of *four Periods* of Time, the Senſe whereof we muſt alſo bring from the Context itſelf; for I cannot but think more is meant thereby, than that they were to be looſed *ſuch an Hour, of ſuch a Day, of ſuch a Month, in ſuch a Year*; As we read of the Dates of ſome notable Deeds, *Numb.* i. 1. *Hag.* i. 15. for the adding a blank Date to this Deed, could contribute nothing to the underſtanding thereof. If it be applied to the Time conſumed by the Angel in looſing of them, that *one Angel* was looſed in *an Hour*, the *next* in *a Day*, &c. we ſhall make a moſt difficult Work: And beſides, even taking the Fractions of Time literally, it would coſt the Angel thirteen Months Labour, and by Conſequence ſpin out the Viſion, yea, this Part of it, all that Space, which is moſt improbable. Nay, when we are acquainted with limited Times, it is ſaid, The *Prophet* heard the ſame from ſome of the Interlocutors in the Viſion; the ſame Difficulties will preſs the Application of theſe Seaſons to their Preparation; for it would ſay, That one of them would be prepared in an Hour, and another would take a Year, *&c.* which, in my Opinion, is not a fit Way of ſpeaking of God's Inſtruments: Beſide, in the Sequal of the Viſion, they ſeem all to be *prepared at once*. It remains then, that the Fractions of Time be applied to their Work. Others alſo think they have all the Senſe, when they ſay they ſignify their Speed, Growth and Perſeverance; while others work at the prophetical Way of counting, and ſo it amounts to 396 Years, and the Hour they make to be 15 Days: But here they are out of their Calcul; for in the Eaſt they never counted more than twelve Hours in the Day, ſo that it muſt ſignify 30 Days or a Month: This I take to be the ſafeſt, and ſo this Viſion will, in its Influence, laſt much longer than that under the *fifth Trumpet*. But yet, if we allow the *Hour*, *Day*, and *Month*, to run parallel to the *Year*, it will make only the laſt of theſe Angels to laſt 365 Years, and the other three to be done with their Work long before: But the beſt Interpreter will be the Accompliſhment of the Viſion itſelf.

3. The Deſign of both the *preparing* and *looſing* them, *To ſlay the third Part of Men*. Whence it is plain, the Conſequent of this *Trumpet* will be more bloody than all the other *five*. Where we are to view,

(1.) Againſt whom they are directed, *Men*: Which we are to oppoſe not only to Beaſts, but as *natural* Men are oppoſed to *ſpiritual*. From the 20. *v.* it ſeems plain they will be Idolaters, Murderers, and Unclean; ſo that the Interpretation of this Viſion is certainly to the Enemies of Chriſt, and can in no Senſe be applied to the Church.

(2.) Their Work, *To ſlay*. Under the *fifth Trumpet* their Lives were ſpared, but under this there will be *Slaughter*, and a very great Deſtruction; for theſe Angels will not pity, but ſlay wherever they come: As it was of old threatned, *Iſa.* x. 6. *I will ſend him againſt an hypocritical Nation, and againſt the People of my Wrath will I give him a Charge, to take the Spoil, and to take the Prey, and to tread them down like the Mire of the Streets.*

(3.) The Extent of their Miſchief, *A third Part of Men*; the reſt will be reſerved to the Vials. This then is to be the Prelude to the Ruin and final Deſolation of *Babylon*. I am eaſy whether we take a third Part literally, or for a great Number; for it is plain, more will be reſerved than deſtroyed; the Deſign is, to engage the Survivers to Repentance.

16 And the Number of the Army of the Horſemen *were* Two hundred thouſand thouſand: And I heard the Number of them.

17 And thus I ſaw the Horſes in the Viſion, and them that ſat on them, having Breaſt-plates of Fire, and of Jacinct, and Brimſtone, and the Heads of the Horſes were as the Heads of Lions, and out of their Mouths iſſued Fire, and Brimſtone, and Smoke.

18 And by theſe three were the third Part of Men killed; by the Fire, and by the Smoke, and by the Brimſtone, which iſſued out of their Mouths.

19 For their Power is in their Mouth, and in their Tails: For their Tails were like unto Serpents, and had Heads, and with them they do Hurt.

'Tis very plain, what we have in theſe Verſes is nothing elſe but the Illuſtration of what we had in the former Part of the Trumpets; for, when the Angels were looſed, the Army appears: Which is further confirmed by the Account of their Execution, *the third Part of Men.* In both, this we muſt allow to be the *ſame third Part*, elſe we muſt make them *two third Parts*, and then only *one third Part* could remain, which is too little Work for the *ſeven Vials.* We have here a very formidable Account of this Army, commanded by the *four Angels*; or, if the *Angels* were the Emblem of them all, the Matter will be eaſy, by allowing them to be *Collectives*, in *Civil* and *Military* Affairs, as we found them above in *Eccleſiaſtick*: Nor will the Figure be foreign, ſince in the plaineſt Scripture we have both Miniſters and private Chriſtians deſigned *Soldiers*, and their Work a *Warfare.*

Here we have to conſider, 1. What he heard of this Army, *v.* 16. 2. What he had repreſented to him in Viſion, *v.* 17. 3. What they did, *v.* 18. 4. The Grounds of this laſt, *v.* 19.

I. What he heard of this *Army*, *v.* 16. The *Spirit of God* did not ſee it meet to repreſent to him the whole Forces at firſt, by the Account of their vaſt Number; that he might prepare the Apoſtle to notice their Appearance. In this are, 1. Their Quality. 2. Their Number. 3. The *Cauſa ſcientiæ.*

1. Their Quality, *Horſemen.* I ſee no Neceſſity of taking this ſtrictly, as if the whole Army were *Cavalry*, and no *Infantry* at all; or yet, that we ſhould take this with Alluſion to the Manner of the *Perſian* Armies, which did generally conſiſt of Horſemen; nor need we believe that in this Place the *Spirit* only gives an Account of the *Horſe*, and leaves us to conjecture the *Foot.* It is enough we underſtand the Properties of Horſemen to agree to the whole Forces, *i. e.* Swiftneſs, Forwardneſs, and Strength: For, tho' there might be a Part of them Foot, yet even theſe were as formidable as Horſemen; for it is always reckoned, that the Strength, as well as the Beauty of an Army, conſiſts in the *Cavalry.* If we go beyond this, we may be in Hazard to loſe our ſelves in Difficulties.

2. Their Number, *Two hundred thouſand thouſand*; which, reduced to our Terms of Arithmetick, ſounds *Two hundred Millions.* This is indeed the greateſt Number of Men ever was read of. The *Perſian* Army that invaded *Greece*, to their own Ruin, were counted by ſome, to be about 7 or 8, and others 10 Millions of Men; which is mentioned by Hiſtorians, as PRIDEAUX obſerves, as the greateſt Army ever was in the World; but they were only the Proportion of One to Twenty to this Army. How great a Proportion this *Perſian* Army bore to the whole Empire, is very hard to determine; and if we ſhould attain it, which I know of no Records will give ſufficient Aſſiſtance to, yet I ſee not how thence we could come to any Conjecture about the Number of Mankind: If the *Church* from the *ſixth Seal* had ſwelled to this Number now, is as uncertain; for there we have only the *Jews* numbred, but not the *Gentiles.* Others take a more clever Way with this, and ſay it is an *indefinite* Number expreſt by a *definite*, as the Word μυριας in its Uſe will juſtify: For we read, *Luke* xii. 1. *There were gathered an innumerable Multitude of People*; But in the Original it reads an Hundred thouſand People. But, whether we can allow this, will be found, when we conſider,

3. The Ground of his Knowledge of this, *And I heard the Number of them.* We had the ſame Phraſe, *Chap.* vii. 4. which theſe, who are for a *definite* Number, think fortifies their Plea; yet, it muſt be owned, if there be any Weight in this, it has it from themſelves: But, if the 144000 be a *definite* Number, it is not poſſible to ſhift it here. I refer to what is ſaid there.

II. What he had repreſented to him in Viſion concerning this Army. They have in the former Verſe the Deſignation, *Army*, becauſe they were diſciplined and appointed Forces; not like a confuſed Mob, but a Number of *regular Troops*, who are generally like a braſen Wall againſt their Enemies, and no doubt theſe will be found ſuch. Here we have an Account of both the *Horſe* and their *Riders*, prefaced with, *And thus I ſaw.* Some think, the ουτως reſpects the Number in the former Verſe; and ſo the Senſe is agreeable to this vaſt Number, I ſaw this *Army.* Others contend, it reſpects the Contents of this Verſe; and ſo the Meaning is, After the following Repreſentation, I ſaw the Manner of this *Army*, at leaſt, I had a View of a Sample of them: Nor indeed was it poſſible for him, having firſt heard of ſuch a vaſt Number, and afterwards ſeen an Army, to know by the Eye if they were preciſely that Number: This ſeems to be the more credible, that he adds *in the Viſion*, which we had not in the firſt, to aſſure us there was now an Emblem in his View, whereas before was only a Sound in his Ears. Here we are ſhortly to notice,

1. The Riders, *I ſaw them that ſat on them* [the Horſes] *having Breaſt-plates.* Some would have this Piece of Furniture belong to the Horſes, as well as their *Riders*; becauſe ſometimes *Horſes* are harnaſſed: But the Text mentioning the *Horſes* again afterwards, makes it probable that this is to be meant mainly of their Riders, of whom we have no other Account, than from their *Breaſt-plates*, a Piece of Armour that covers the whole Trunk of the Body, and may comprehend the ſeveral Pieces of a *Mail-coat*, as is uſual in Scripture to expreſs the Whole by the moſt conſpicuous Part. Of the Breaſt-plates we have three Things ſaid, 1. They are ſaid to be *of Fire*, which is terrible to, and frightful of their Enemies. 2. Of *Jacinct*, or, as ſome render it, of a *Hyacinthian Colour*. Jacinct ſometimes ſignifies a Flower, which we call a *Violet*; At other Times it ſignifies a precious Stone of a high purpure Colour. I ſee nothing elſe can be meant here, but either the Colour or Harnaſs, or both: And indeed, all Steel, when poliſhed and tempered, has both the Hardneſs of a Stone, and the Colour of a Violet, and will ſhew at a great Diſtance. 3. Of *Brimſtone*. This muſt either note the Colour, which, ſome tell us, was moſt ordinary to dye Armour with Figures of Brimſtone, for Beauty and Show: Others tell us, The fineſt Armour was tempered with Brimſtone, and ſuch was reckoned to be *proven*. But all theſe are only Conjectures, as is the other, which make theſe three ſymbolical of their Natures; as Fire of their deſtructive Deſigns, the blue ſmoky Colour of their Errors; and the Sulphure of their perverſe Morals: For, if theſe ſhould happen to be God's Army, as I think is moſt probable, it is a very pitiful Character theſe *Gentlemen* give them. All theſe then may repreſent the Terror of their Appearance.

2. The Horſes, whom we have deſcribed only from their Heads; and that, 1. As to their Reſemblance, *The Heads of the Horſes were as the Heads of Lions.* This may point at their Fierceneſs, and undauntoned Boldneſs; To purſue the Metaphor too far, might not be ſo proper, tho' ſome incline to do it. 2. What comes out of their Mouths? *Out of their Mouths iſſued Fire, and Smoke, and Brimſtone.* Theſe three we had in the Riders Breaſt-plates; only what is there called *Jacinct*, is here rendred *Smoke*: Which ſeems to plead, more Regard is to be had to the Colour of the former, than any Thing elſe. And that here a fiery Smoke is underſtood, there are a great Variety of Opinions about this, tho' all of them incumbred with Difficulties. I do indeed think they are neareſt it, who make this an Emblem of Fire-arms, in the Exploſion of which, there is *Fire, Smoke, and Brimſtone.* Nor is the Difficulty great, that it is ſaid, *Theſe iſſue out of theſe Horſes Mouths*; for tho' they come not from their Throats, yet, being diſcharged by the Riders, theſe come from their Mouths, tho' not out of them; nor indeed will the Words bear more. And what is urged by another, That Guns and Powder were not invented by the *Turks*, ſays juſt nothing: For, whatever others think, 'tis plain this is not a *Turkiſh* Army; Yea, tho' it were, might not an Army have theſe Arms, unleſs they had been the firſt Inventers of them? eſpecially that this is a Prophecy.

III. What they did, *v.* 18. *By theſe were the third Part of Men killed, by the Fire,* &c. All the Words we explained before: Here I ſhall only further notice theſe three Things; 1. That the *Breaſt-plates* were for *Defence*, not for *Offence*; for we hear of none killed by them. 2. That the Notion of Fire-arms not is impertinently applied to *Fire, Smoke and Brimſtone*, ſeeing they did all the Execution; nor do I ſee another Senſe can take its Place with more Probability. 3. It was not by the *Horſes*, but the *Men* on the Horſes, that all this Slaughter was brought about; for the Commiſſion was given to the *Angels*, v. 15. and here in the Execution, they, with the Advantage and Aſſiſtance of their Horſes, had brought it to paſs: For, tho' *Horſes* may do Execution at an Engagement, yet, were they never ſo well train'd, the *Riders* do more.

Now, when all theſe are put together, we may only think, whether that Notion of a great many can take Place, That the *killing* of this *third Part* of Men, can be meant of *poiſoning* them with *Errors*; it would do well in the *fifth Trumpet*, but there is no Room for it here.

IV. We have the Grounds of this laſt, in very prophetical Expreſſions, *v.* 19. The Grounds are two; The *1ſt* from the Execution done by their *Mouths*; of this we have ſpoken. The *2d* is, *They had Power alſo in their Tails*; to clear this, it is added, *Their Tails were like unto Serpents, that had Heads.* 'Tis plain, theſe differ from the Tails of the *Locuſts*, which were only like to *Scorpions*; but theſe have Tails like to *Serpents*, and here one is mentioned, which is a moſt poiſonable and deſtructive Beaſt, ſuch as have Heads on their Tails: There is but one known of this Kind, *viz. Amphisbæna*, a two-headed Monſter, whereof one is at the Extremity of the Tail; and the Feet are ſo diſpoſed, that the Creature can move either backward or forward: They are ſaid to be moſt terrible and dangerous to Travellers; they abound moſt in *Golionda*, a tributary Country of the *Great Mogul*. Some think this is to be meant of the Horſe-

Horſemen taking up Footmen behind them, for Expedition. Others think this to be an Emblem of the whole Army, to ſhew that both Front and Reer are well provided, either for Defence or Offence. Others are of Opinion, by the *Tail* is to be underſtood the *Infantry*; and that the Tail has a Head, ſhews them to be well managed, and to have particular and experienced *Generals* of their own, diſtinct from the *Cavalry*, which is ordinary: Nor can I believe there is any Eye here to the Way of the *Perſians* Fighting, who, 'tis ſaid, have a *Slight* of throwing Darts behind them on Flight; for this Army, we are ſure, will not be defeat.

20 And the reſt of the Men which were not killed by theſe Plagues, yet repented not of the Works of their Hands, that they ſhould not worſhip Devils, and Idols of Gold, and Silver, and Braſs, and Stone, and of Wood, which neither can ſee, nor hear, nor walk:

21 Neither repented they of their Murders, nor of their Sorceries, nor of their Fornication, nor of their Theſts.

Here we have the Iſſue of this terrible Judgment, which, in my Opinion, determines the Controverſy, againſt whom all this Expedition was deſigned; and, from the Faith and Authority of theſe Words, I can ſafely affirm, not againſt the Church, and conſequently againſt her *Enemies*. This is clear to a Demonſtration; for all this Herd are in *three third Parts*, whereof we had an Account of *one* Third, how they were cut off by this formidable Army: And now, in theſe two Verſes, we hear of the other *two Thirds*, called *The reſt of the Men who were not killed by theſe Plagues*. Here Expoſitors are put to a hard Shift to extricate themſelves; for, if they were all *Members* of the Church, they muſt make ſad Members of them, that are all *Idolaters*, *Sorcerers*, *Murderers*, *Laſcivous*, and *Thieves*. That I may clear this a little, I offer from the Words theſe few Conſiderations. 1. They cannot ſay they were *Saints* who are killed; for to make the *Saints* ſuffer, and the *Prophane* eſcape, could be no Aggravation of the living *Prophane*'s Sins, that they did not abandon theſe Sins, becauſe others were killed who never were guilty of them; it would rather make the haill World hate Sanctity, when her Votaries ſped ſo ill. 2. It is plain this Judgment was to make the ſinful World without Excuſe, that God in Wrath had cut off ſo many, and the Surviving were as guilty as the Dead. 3. This is not a Perſecution, but a Plague: Now, Perſecution is call'd a *Trial*, not a *Plague*, always where it is mentioned in *Scripture*, as we heard in the *Epiſtles*; and *Satan* and his Emiſſaries are Inſtruments thereof: But *Plagues* come from God, and are directed againſt the *Irreclaimable* by all other Methods. 4. It ſeems evident from theſe Words, all mentioned, whether *dead* or *alive*, are that *Part of the World* diſtinct from, yea and oppoſite to the Church: For the worſt Church that ever was, had always ſome good Thing in it, and which God never failed to mention; but here, all are of a Piece, not one to mend another. 5. All theſe *Trumpets* have been of a Piece, and therefore they are ſumm'd up in this Paſſage, under the Deſignation of *theſe Plagues*: All which will be more clear, when we have taken a diſtinct View of the Words, as they ly before us; where we are to conſider, 1. Their diſtinguiſhing Mercy. 2. Their Impenitency. 3. Their great and aggravated Guilt.

1. Their diſtinguiſhing Mercy, *The reſt of the Men which were not killed by theſe Plagues*. Some tell us, 'This is a clear Evidence this was a Scourge ſent againſt the Church, who were guilty of great Enormities. I wiſh they had told us whence they fetch this: I own myſelf ſo ſtupid, as not to ſee any Veſtige of this in the Text. Will they conclude it is the Church, upon this bare Ground, That ſo many Sins abound in this Herd? I profeſs, of all the Marks of a Church, Scripture caſts up, I apprehend this will be the laſt can be brought in: And, if the Scripture ſays, We *ſhould not receive an Accuſation againſt one Elder*, a ſingle Church-officer, *but at the Mouth of two or three Witneſſes*; How may any Man ſtage the whole Church without the moſt glaring Evidence? Eſpecially that we find an Account, *Chap.* vii. of a moſt deſirable State of the Church. Can we think, ſhe being a true Church, would grow worſe under the Rod? this is what never any did; but theſe are intirely *eſtranged* from the *Life of God*. Let us not then, to ſerve a Turn, immerſe the whole Church in a capital Crime, as that of being hardned after ſix ſeveral Reproofs muſt be, but ingenuouſly acknowledge the true and natural Senſe of the Prophecy.

2. Their Impenitency, *They repented not*. This certainly is the moſt miſerable Condition a Sinner can be in, on this Side of Hell, becauſe by it they are put without the

Sight of Mercy; which State of theirs is wonderfully accented by this, that they had been Witneſſes of theſe Plagues upon their Fellows, and Brethren in Iniquity; that the ſame Guilt, the *Blood* of the *Slain* ſpoke, was witneſſed by the *Conſciences* of the *Living*. And their Sin is further aggravated from this, that they were reprived, while others were execute; and yet they have not ſo much as one relenting Thought. O *Iron* or *Adamantine* hearted Church! And, how unworthy of the *Seal*, or the *white Robes*! It would be conſidered here, the prophetical Strain is not ſpeaking of graceleſs Hypocrites, under the Notion of the Church; and I may ſafely challenge any to point me one Portion of Chriſt's Word, where theſe, by themſelves, get the Name of the *Church*? I own indeed, the Church is ſometimes compared to a *Net*, that haleth Fiſhes, whereof ſome are *good*, and others *bad*; And ſometimes to a Field, where *Tares* grow with the *Wheat*: And this only is the viſible Church. Where then will we meet with a Paſſage to humour this Notion, that the whole Church are wicked and graceleſs? For the Inſtances of the *Iſraelites* Defection will not anſwer their Deſign, for we know they ceaſed to be a Church when the Contagion of *Idolatry* did go through them, except a *Remnant*, or, as ſometimes, *a few Berries on the uppermoſt Boughs*: But ſtill, theſe are named and diſtinguiſhed from the reſt; but here, all go one Way. Nay, I might ask theſe learned *Gentlemen*, Whether ever the State of the Church of God was ſo much ſunk, as not to find one to ſigh for the Abominations of the Land, even while the *Sword* had devoured a *third Part* thereof? And when theſe *Plagues* happened upon the Impenitent, whether the Lord did not take ſpecial Notice of them, and record their very Tears, and make ſpecial Promiſes of Conſolation, Mercy, and Deliverance to them? If this be true, as I am ready to believe will not be diſputed, then, I think, this is not a *Perſecution directed againſt the Church*.

If it be alledged, that God had made a *Separation under the ſixth Seal*: This I ſhall eaſily grant; but then, I would enquire, Whether theſe he left, could, in the Sight and Mind of God, come under the Notion of a Church? I hope, it will be allowed on all Hands, the *Sealed* were the *Church of God*, and the reſt were not a Church at all, but really the *Synagogue of Satan*. We may allow them a Profeſſion, or what elſe we will, if we ſtrip them of Grace, they are no more worthy of the Character of the *Church of God*; in that Senſe the Apoſtles uſed it through the whole New Teſtament. Upon the Whole, I think it very plain, theſe are all God's *Enemies*: This *Trumpet* ſounds a laſt *Alarm* to them, for they had got five before; which ſeems to be the moſt eaſy and natural Senſe we can put upon all we have ſaid on this, *The reſt of the Men which were not killed by theſe Plagues, repented not*.

3. We have the great and aggravated Guilt in the reſt of the two Verſes, which will as little agree to the *Church of God* as any of the reſt; and any who pleaſe, will find (with God) theſe *Spots* are not the *Spots* of his *People*. There are a great many Particulars here, that belong more to the practical Writer, than one who would of Purpoſe vindicate the Truths of God; and therefore I ſhall but glance at them in theſe few Things.

(1.) The general Deſignation of their Wickedneſs, *The Works of their Hands*. The Debate about this is not worth the diſcuſſing: Sometimes in Scripture this is ſtraitned a little, and confined to Idols or Images, which in the moſt proper Senſe are the Works of Mens Hands, and hateful to God; And it were endleſs to ſum up all the Paſſages of the Prophets, that declare ſo much, *Pſal.* cxxxv. 15. *The Idols of the* Heathen *are Silver and Gold, the Work of Mens Hands*. And, to refuſe this, were very hard here, eſpecially that we have ſuch an Enumeration of the Tools of Idolatry afterwards. However, ſeeing we have a larger Senſe of it in Scripture, and this Context is well able to bear it, yea requires it; We may, without Grudging, give it its fulleſt Comprehenſion; and ſo it is taken for all evil Deeds, or Works of Iniquity: And thus we have it advanced and enlarged by the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* xxviii. 4. *Give them according to their Deeds, and according to the Wickedneſs of their Endeavours; give them after the Work of their Hands, render to them their Deſert*. I mention but one other by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Lam. iii. 64. *Render unto them a Recompence, O Lord, according to the Works of their Hands*. Taking it thus, then it will comprehend all the Sins after-mentioned; whereas, if we take it in the firſt Senſe, then it will only comprehend one Branch of *Idolatry* after-mentioned in this Verſe, but will not have in its View, the *firſt Step* of that *Idolatry*, the *Worſhipping* of *Devils*; for *Devils* are not the Works of Mens Hands, and many worſhip them without any Uſe of *Images*.

(2.) Particularly, we have an Account of the Sins thus ranged:

[1.] Their *Idolatry*, throughout this 20th *v.* where may notice, 1. The grand Object of all Idolatry, *Devils*; for all Idolatry is a *Worſhipping of Devils*, whether the Perſon think thereof, or not. This is the common Notion of it from Scripture, *Deut.* xxxvii.

xxxvii. 17. *They ſacrificed to Devils, not to God, to gods whom they knew not, to gods new come up.* The Word δαιμονια may be rendred *Spirits*, and will ſignify *Spirits* either *good* or *bad*, or the Souls of departed Men and Women. And ſo it runs ſquare with the common Maxim of all Idolaters, *That the great God muſt be worſhipped by the Intermediation of ſubaltern Powers in Heaven, who will carry our Prayers to God.* And yet our Tranſlation is very juſt; for, whatever Worſhip is not immediately directed to God, may be ſaid to be paid to the Devil: As we read, 2 *Chron.* xi. 15. Jeroboam *made Prieſts for the high Places, and for Devils.* In this Senſe, the Apoſtle, no doubt, is to be underſtood, when he tells us, 1 *Cor.* x. 20. *The Things which the* Gentiles *ſacrifice, they ſacrifice to Devils, and not to God.* So that, whether it be before *Images*, or not, it alters not the general Character of Idolatry, if God be not the immediate Object. 2. The Tools or Inſtruments of Idolatry, *Idols of Gold, and Silver, and Braſs, and Wood, and Stone*; theſe are the common Materials which their *Images* are made of: Not that they believed theſe Idols they made were the very *Spirits* they worſhipped, for no *Heathen* was ever ſo groſly ſtupid; but they did indeed believe, that theſe Images were conſecrated (as they called it) and that after theſe Solemn Rites, their gods did inhabite them, reſide in them, and were preſent to obſerve their Devotions, and were ſpecially ſatisfied with what was done before theſe Repreſentations: A very ſenſleſs Conceit, and yet the very Tranſcript of the *Popiſh Party*, and as much of the *Mahometans* at their *Prophet's Shrine.* Who then can refuſe the Character of *Idolaters* to them both, in the moſt ample and extenſive Senſe? 3. The Apoſtle advances a Confutation of theſe Practices from the Senſleſneſs of theſe *Images*, or Idols, *which neither can ſee, nor hear, nor walk.* This is abſolutely true of *Idols* made of theſe Materials above-named, and in a qualified Senſe is as true of the *Spirits* repreſented by them; for theſe neither know our Conditions, nor hear our Prayers, and as little can they move one Foot for our Relief or Deliverance. Theſe Perfections are only competent to the *great Creator of Heaven and Earth*, Iſa. lxiii. 16. *Doubtleſs thou art our Father, though* Abraham *be ignorant of us, and* Iſrael *acknowledge us not.*

[2.] The next *Work of their Hands* is their *Murders.* This challenges the ſecond Room in their Guilt; for as Idolatry is the moſt comprehenſive Sin againſt the *Firſt Table*, becauſe one Way or other it breaks them all; ſo *Murder* is the greateſt Sin againſt the *Second*, for in like Manner it ſtrikes at all the other Precepts therein: This reſpects not only what we properly call *Murder*, but all *unjuſt Wars* and *Bloodſheds*, all *Perſecutions*, all *unjuſt Laws* that decree Wickedneſs, and have capital Puniſhments as the Sting of them; all *Maſſacres, tyrannical Invaſions* of Peoples Lives and Liberties; all theſe come under the Name of *Murder*, as well as private *Revenge*: And here *Murders* being in the Plural, muſt take in all.

[3.] Their *Sorceries.* φαρμακειῶν ſignifies either *Medicine* in a good Senſe, or *Poiſon* in a bad, in which here no doubt we are to take it. It is rendred *Witchcraft*, Gal. v. 20. it ſignifies *Charms, Spells, Conjurations*, all *Magical Practices*; and may extend itſelf to *deluding* and *intoxicating Errors*, wherewith they endeavoured to *poiſon* the Minds of Men; for all theſe are Methods moſt commonly practiſed among *Idolaters.*

[4.] *Their Fornication.* This is a General, and comprehends under it all the ſeveral Sorts of *Uncleanneſs, Poligamy, Bigamy*, and whatever other fleſhly Pieces of Wickedneſs are in Uſe among them that fear not God. Here one ſhould think there is a *Speciality*, either that theſe Sins are hedged about by Laws, or ſupported by common Practice, as all the other Things before-mentioned; for to be ſure theſe are *rampant Sins*, of which no Notice is taken, and is the common Follower of *Idolatry*; for theſe have Laws or Conſtitutions againſt ſuch: A particular Enumeration and Application of them, as well as the former two, do ſo manifeſtly father themſelves upon the Enemies of the People of God, that it would be loſt Labour to prove it. And what a great Part *Papiſts* and *Mahometans* (whom I cannot get ſeparate in Wickedneſs) have in the ſame, is as *evident*, as if written with a *Sun-beam*: But we will have further Occaſion to touch this ungrateful String.

[5.] Their *Thefts.* No doubt this is to be underſtood of *Covetouſneſs*, and all the curſed Diſcoveries thereof, in the meaneſt and moſt indigent Perſon alive: But it were hard to confine it to theſe little ſorry pilfering Thieves and Robbers, who want Wit and Power to do any more than bring themſelves to the Halter, in moſt Part of Governments in the World, whether they be good or bad. Now, will any wiſe Man think God was at Pains to levy an Army of Two hundred Millions to purſue ſuch Flies as theſe? No: To be ſure theſe are rich in their Kind, and not *puny Robbers* that deal in Retail, but they are to be meant of the Whole-ſale Villans in the World, and theſe that, from Generation to Generation, had drove a Trade of invading the Properties, of not

only particular and private Perſons, but even of whole Kingdoms and Communities: Alſo, theſe ſlee Methods for enriching the *Author* at the Ruin of *theſe concerned*, and have had a gainful Imploy of it for many Hundreds of Years. It is not neceſſary, ſure, to enquire what Hand the *Papal Intereſt* have had in theſe Things, and how much the Believers of *Mahomet* have proſpered this Way?

Might not a Body now gravely ask a great many of our learned Interpreters, How can they look the World in the Face, and charge the *Church of God* with *theſe Things*, and bottom the Sufferings of the Church thereon? No doubt the Memory of the Dead is as little obliged to them, as the Credit of the Living. I could make an Apology for them, for I am ready to believe this Error has no Wickedneſs in it; but a great many have taken ſo much upon the Fidelity of others, they have forgot to look out for themſelves: This is a Truth, a good many may be eaſily convict of by their own Confeſſions; and in ſpecial, the learned *Marckius*, who many a Time ſmothers his own free Thoughts, that he may jog on in the ſame Tract with his *Country-men*: But I'll venture to ſay, If the Learned uſe not greater Freedom, and take more Advice from the *old Prophets* than the *late Expoſitors*, we are not like to have this obſcure Part of Scripture opened up, till it be all accompliſhed.

That I may path a Way to the further Application of this Part of the *ſixth Trumpet*, I would premiſe ſomething in *general* concerning *Idolatry*; wherein I ſhall be ſhort, and fetch the Throng of it from the learned and curious *Prideaux*, interſperſed with the Thoughts of ſome others beſide.

All the Idolatry that has appeared in the World from the Beginning, may be reduced to one of theſe two Generals; the

1*ſt*, Called *Magi*, were a refined Sort of Idolaters, who held two firſt Principles, one of *Light* or *Good*, the other of *Darkneſs* or *Evil*: And that the good Principle dwelt in Light, and the bad in Darkneſs; therefore they worſhipped the good Being, or God, always towards Fire or Light, and eſpecially towards the *Sun*. Of this Sort were the Throng of the *Heathen Philoſophers*, varying according to their different Humours. This Sort of *Idolatry* underwent a great many Changes, until it was rectified and poliſhed by *Zoroaſtres*, a notable *Philoſopher* and *Impoſtor*, who flouriſhed, as ſome think, about the End of the *Jewiſh Captivity* at *Babylon*, before the Sacrifices were reſtored in the Holy Place. Some ſay, He was the Prophet *Daniel*'s Man, or waiting Servant; however, he appears to have been well acquainted with the Writings of the *Old Teſtament*: But if he was any Time in Company with that *Great Man*, he had been more obſerving of his *Learning* than *Piety* and *Honeſty*. Theſe *Magi* were inveterate Enemies to all Sorts of *Images*, and at length did proſylite the moſt Part of the *Perſian* Empire, and deſpiſed all who did not receive their Principles.

2*d* Sort were called *Sabæi*, who were a very groſs Sort of Idolaters, and made much Uſe of *Images*. This is ſaid to be the moſt *ancient* Idolatry, at leaſt moſt *univerſally received*, till it was exploded by the *Perſians*, as a groſs and unreaſonable Religion; Yet ſtill it obtained in *Greece*, and was propagate with their victorious Arms through the moſt Part of the known World: And, upon the Declenſion of the *Grecian* Empire, the prevailing *Romans* had Pity on this Brat of *Satan*, and cheriſhed it, till ſome Centuries after the Appearance of the *Glorious Redeemer* in the Fleſh, till the Time of *Julian* and *Porphyry*, who ſeemed more inclinable to the *Magian* Principles: And ſo by Degrees it languiſhed, until the Emperor *Conſtantine* turned Chriſtian, and aboliſhed them both, in the Beginning of the *fourth Century*.

From the firſt of theſe Idolatrous *Sects*, about the End of the ſixth, or Beginning of the ſeventh Age of Chriſtianity, ſprung the Error of *Mahomet*, who blended together what of theſe were *voluptuous*, and added to this Mixture, ſome Spices of *Judaiſm*, as *Circumciſion*, the *Waſhings*, &c. as alſo ſomething out of *Chriſtianity*, but of the worſt and moſt heretical Sects: Of all theſe was compoſed that Mixture of *Error*, *Blaſphemy* and *Senſuality*, which goes under the Name of the *Alcoran*. Theſe Principles were firſt received by the *Arabians*, otheriſe called *Saracens*, who propagated them with their Empire for near the Space of 700 Years; and then the *Turks* defeat them, but borrowed their falſe Religion, which they have propagate hitherto with their conquering Arms. It has got Poſſeſſion of the moſt Part of *Perſia* and the *Mogul*'s Country; ſo that now, three of the greateſt Empires of the World are leavened with that impure Doctrine of *Mahomet*, beſides a great many other leſſer Powers, ſome whereof own themſelves Tributaries to *one* or *other* of the three, and ſome of them ſet up for themſelves, and acknowledge none of them: Theſe have all along been profeſſed Enemies of *Chriſtianity*, and have ſhed much of the *precious Blood* of the Saints, before the *ſixth Seal* was opened.

The

The second Sect of Idolaters, called the *Sabæi*, were low for some Time, their Religion being only professed by a few of the *grosser* and more loose Sort of the *Gentiles*, as the other had prevailed till the Beginning of the seventh Century, *Rome* then *Christian*, but much enervate by the extravagant Bounty of fond Princes; which Temper of theirs had no small Mixture of Superstition. From these Principles, they did what they could to render the *Christian Worship pompous*, and thereby destroyed its primitive Simplicity. This they seem'd to do, partly in Imitation of the *Jews*, from whom they had borrowed many Things; and partly in Imitation of the *Sabæans*, whom, they gave out, they were willing to gain over to *Christianity*, by retaining not a few of their Rites. Now, the *Sabæi* had been much obliged to the *Jews* for many Things in the *Mysteries* of their Worship, but had made them much worse by their Additions: Hence came *Altars*, *Priests*, *Temples*, and at Length was added *Images*, and all the other Trumpery of the coarsest Pagans; so that in the Decurse of a few Centuries, *Rome Pagan* and *Rome Christian* differed nothing but in Name. It is true, some Authors observe, that the great Affinity betwixt the *Christian Romans* and the *Sabæans*, in their Worship, moved a great many *Pagans* to join the Church; and they add as the Reason, Because the *Romish Religion* was nearer their own than that of the *Mahometans*, and more agreeable to their ancient received Customs: A Topick goes a great Way with Men of no Conscience. However, in Truth this Victory was rather over the *Cross of Christ*, than the Abominations of the Heathens; for betwixt the two, not only the *Power*, but even the *Form of Godliness* was lost.

Upon the whole then, if these Accounts hold, which I have no Scruple to affirm they will, it appears that all the *Idolatry* in the World has been suckt up by these two, *Papists* and *Mahometans*. Yet I would not have this so understood, as if there were no *separate Idolaters*, which had not joined themselves to some of them; for to be sure there are yet a great many that adhere to the *Superstition* of their Forefathers of both Sides. Yet, I'll venture to affirm, there is in Practice, and Opinion too, as great Pieces of Wickedness and Error, amongst the *Votaries* of *Rome* and *Mecca*, as can be found thorow the *Heathen or Pagan World*.

That I said these Preliminaries would facilitate our Way to a general Application of this Vision, I think I have in Part made out; and for the rest, I shall wrap it up in a short Answer to these two Questions; for I apprehend no Man with Safety can be particular.

Quest. 1. To whom do these *Armies* belong, who are represented by the *four Angels*? A great many contend they are *Mahometans*; and that their Execution is to be made by their Inroads into, and Devastations of *Christian Kingdoms* and Provinces. But herein they do not agree among themselves, nor do I see it possible to reconcile any of them with the Strain of the *Prophecy*; but I would know what Ground they fetch from the Text to prove them to be so: As for these from their own Schemes, I have no Regard to them; all I can meet with is, because the Angels are said to be bound in the *great River* Euphrates; which, in the Explication, I think is removed. Besides, I would know what that *River* has been famous for since the Destruction of *Babylon*; for it has no Trade, nor is there any great City upon it now, that commands but a very small Part of the adjacent Countries. Besides, to make this Army *Mahometans* or *Pagans*, is to make them very ill Men, and Enemies to the People and Cause of God: But how prove they this? I am sure the whole Context is silent as to such Characters. They are made *stout*, *couragious*, and *destructive*; but may not the best Men in the World be all these, when they are directed against God's Enemies? And therefore I conclude, these *four Angels* represent some great Powers will fall off from *Mahometanism* and *Popery*, and will afterwards turn their Arms against them. But when God will enlighten them to shake off that Yoke? or what particular Powers these will be? Time, that unriddles many Mysteries, must be left to declare.

Quest. 2. Against whom is this Army sent? The Throng tell us, Against the *Church*. But now, after all is said, I may enquire whether the Characters agree to the *Church*, or her sworn *Enemies*? And we find, in the fifth Seal, a Promise of Vengeance against the *Persecutors* of the Church, and God is never worse than his Word; which must be said here, if, instead of avenging them, he should let loose such a terrible Army against them. It seems plain therefore, from the whole Parts of this Vision, that this Army will make their Expedition against the Enemies of the Cross, and that *Papists* and *Musselmans* will both pay for it: For as they *rose* about a Time, so will they *fall*. And tho' they differ among themselves, and call one another *Infidels*, yet they are on the same Bottom against the Truth; yea, and will join together to oppose it, as we shall hear under the *sixth Vial*: Yea, they have unite already that Way, ofter than once, tho' in a covert Way, as the Histories of both do sufficiently declare.

CHAP. X.

THAT both this Chapter, and to the 14th ver. of Chapter 11th, belongs to the *ſixth Trumpet*, is evident from *v.* 15. of the following Chapter, where it is ſaid, *The ſecond Wo is paſt*; as it was ſaid in the 12. *v.* of *Chap.* ix. *One Wo is paſt*, which all own to be the March betwixt the *Trumpets*. I own, what is contained in this, has little Reſpect to the laſt Trumpet, but yet it is certainly preparatory to the next; and contains in it what will be as comfortable to the *Church*, as no doubt it was to the *Apoſtle* upon the Viſion. As for thoſe who make this a *ſecond Part* of the *Revelation*, and to counter the *firſt Part*, where the Book was ſealed, whereas here it is open, I cannot ſee the Ground of Exultation they make upon this new Invention: For, from the Courſe of the Prophecy, we are not got through the *ſeventh Seal*, which we found comprehended the *ſeven Trumpets*, whereof one of them is yet to ſound; for to be ſure all the *three Woes* are in *one* Book: But if we follow them, one of them muſt be in the firſt Book, and two of them in the ſecond. It is plain the ſealed and the open Books are not the ſame, but different Emblems, as we ſhall ſee at more Length afterwards; and conſequently, that this Book makes no Interruption in the Courſe of the Prophecy. We may then look upon this *Chapter* as an Apendage to the ſixth Trumpet, and comforting to the Church, that now God had begun to deal with their Enemies, and very roundly, in this *Trumpet*; he was to delay no longer, but make a compleat End of them under the *ſeventh*, which I take to be the Subſtance of the whole Chapter. But we would view it in Parts, where we have, 1. The Viſion of a very notable Perſon, *v.* 1, 2. 2. An aſtoniſhing Alarm given by him and others, *v.* 3, 4. 3. A ſolemn Proclamation after that Warning, *v.* 5, 6, 7. 4. The Conſequent of this, with reſpect to the Apoſtle, to the End. All which contains Matters of the greateſt Conſequence of *Terror* to *Babylon*, and *Comfort* to the *Church*.

1 AND I ſaw another mighty Angel come down from Heaven, clothed with a Cloud, and a Rainbow was upon his Head, and his Face *was* as it were the Sun, and his Feet as Pillars of Fire.

2 And he had in his Hand a little Book open: And he ſet his Right-foot on the Sea, and his Left-foot on the Earth.

In this we have to conſider, 1. A ſtrange and general Account of his Perſon and Motion. 2. A Diſcovery of ſome Parts of his Appearance. 3. An Account of his wonderful Poſture.

I. A general Account of his *Perſon* and *Motion*, which ſhews him to be no ordinary *Angel*. We ſhall take it down in theſe Parts;

1. He is called *another Angel*, not only to diſtinguiſh him from the *ſeven Angels* that had the *Trumpets*, but alſo from the *four Angels* were looſed. And indeed this *Angel* appears to be none elſe but Jeſus Chriſt, the *Angel* of the Covenant: Nor will theſe ſeveral Emblems of him, in this Prophecy, make any Thing for the Purpoſe of the *Ubiquitary* Opinion. For it would be moſt unjuſt, from an emblematick Viſion, to one in an *Extaſy*, to Reaſon upon an *Article of Faith*, ſeeing theſe are ſufficiently grounded in the *Word of God*: And here we have only a View of Chriſt's Concern about his *Church*; ſo that whatever Repreſentations are here made, or have been formerly, are to be underſtood of his *Divine Preſence*, typically repreſented.

2. He is deſcribed from one of his diſtinguiſhing Excellencies, and therefore called a *Strong Angel*. Some from this contend this is to be meant of a *created Angel*, becauſe we have the ſame *Adjunct* aſcribed to *One* undoubtedly created, *Chap.* v. 2. and *Chap.* xviii. 21. *A mighty Angel took up a Stone*. In this I find ſome great Men reaſon moſt unreaſonably; for it is a notable Rule the ſounder Part of Expoſitors obſerve in this and other Caſes, That, *when no more is ſaid of an Angel, than ſimply that he is ſtrong or mighty, we may allow this to paſs as a created Angel; but, when we have this Quality joined to other Things that cannot agree to a created Angel, then that Quality of Strength is to be rendred Almighty.* Now, that in this Place we have many Things ſaid of this Angel, cannot agree to any but our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, is plain, by reading the reſt of this Verſe, and comparing it with the emblematical Viſion

ſion of Chriſt, in *Chap.* i. Beſides, we have this ſimple Quality aſcribed to Chriſt, without any Controverſy, in this ſame Prophecy, *Chap.* xviii. 8. *Strong is the Lord that judgeth her.* No Body ever took this for any other than Chriſt; and it is perfectly agreeable to the Word of Promiſe, *Pſal.* lxxxix. 19. *I have laid Help upon One that is Mighty*: And indeed, he had Need of *Strength*, who has ſo many and great Enemies to grapple with; and thus the *Prophet* ſpeaks of him, *Iſa.* xxviii. 2. *The Lord hath a mighty and ſtrong One.*

3. His Motion, *Came down from Heaven.* There are many Difficulties ſtarted here; ſome contend, that this muſt be a new *Viſion*, becauſe now the Prophet is not in Heaven, to which he was invited to come, *Chap.* iv. 1. Beſides, it would be an Impropriety of Speech in *John* to ſay, He ſaw him *come down from Heaven* to the Earth, if the *Prophet* was in the Heavens at that Time. This is very weak; for, tho' our Tranſlators turn it *come down*, it ſignifies properly to *deſcend*, and might be as well rendred, *Go down*, for βαίνω ſignifies *vado*: And therefore, we may allow this to be the Continuation of the former Viſion. But a greater remains: How can it be ſaid, that Chriſt is to *deſcend* from Heaven, till the *Day of Judgment*, ſeeing we are ſure the *Heavens are to contain him till that Time*? This is puſht by theſe who refuſe *Chriſt* to be here ſpoke of. It needs not again and again be told that this is a *Viſion*; for, will theſe *Gentlemen* underſtand the 2*d* Verſe literally, who contend ſo much for a literal Meaning here? Where was there ever a Creature ſo huge, as to ſet one Foot on the Sea, another upon the Earth? And, did I not remark, theſe are Types of the Divine Preſence? God is certainly capable of proper Motion; yet we find him ſpeaking after the Manner of Men, and applying it to himſelf, *Exod.* iii. 8. *I am come down to deliver them out of the Hand of the* Egyptians. Beſides, many other Places might be quoted to the ſame Purpoſe; however, this may ſuffice to any not reſolved to wrangle.

II. There is a Diſcovery of *ſome Parts of his Appearance from Head to Foot, which we ſhall view as they ly in the Text.*

1. His general Garment, which concealed, at leaſt covered, all but what he afterwards mentions, *Clothed with a Cloud.* This, in my Opinion, is a Demonſtration that the *Perſon* here ſpoken of, is *Divine*; for, wherever we read of a Cloud in a glorious Manifeſtation, God is ſaid to be there, as this ſame Apoſtle ſaith, *Rev.* i. 7. *Behold, he cometh with Clouds.* In that Place, ſome think, there is an Illipſis of the Word *Clothed*, which is expreſt here: But this Word properly ſignifies to be *ſurrounded* or wrapt about, and has an Alluſion to that Symbol of *God's Preſence* when he was leading his People, *Exod.* xiii. 21. *The Lord went before them by Day in a Pillar of Cloud.* And ſo, when God was to make a notable Appearance to his People, always the Cloud was there, *Exod.* xix. 9. *Lo, I come unto thee in a thick Cloud, that the People may hear.* And ſo, whenever we hear of a *Cloud*, there is Mention made *of the Glory of the Lord*, Exod. xvi. 10. As for theſe Curioſities, that many divert themſelves with, about theſe Clouds, they appear to be hugging a Cloud, who deal moſt in them; nor were any ever able to ſatisfy either themſelves or others on that Subject.

2. The Ornament of his Head, *A Rainbow was about his Head.* We had this before, *Chap.* iv. 3. there, indeed, it was ſaid to be about the *Throne*, but here about the *Head*; there is little Odds, the ſame Meaning will hold. This alſo is a diſtinguiſhing Mark of *Divinity* in all the *Prophets*, wherever we read of any ſurrounded with a *Rainbow*, the Perſon is God. Only here I would remark, our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* looks upon this Symbol of the Covenant of Grace with Mankind, as one of his moſt *glorious Ornaments*; which ſhould much commend to us him *who is ever mindful of his Covenant.* But further, Chriſt being wrapt in a Cloud now, when he was to rain furious Storms upon his Enemies, under the *ſeventh Trumpet* has a *Rainbow* prepared for the Conſolation of his People, to aſſure them this *Deluge* of his Wrath would not be univerſal, for they ſhould be ſafe through the *Covenant* he had made with them.

3. The Appearance of his Countenance, *His Face was as it were the Sun.* Of this we heard, *Chap.* i. 16. Here I have only to add, this excellent Glory is a ſure Proof it was really Chriſt *John* had this Emblem of.

4. The Appearance of his Feet, *His Feet as Pillars of Fire*; a new Proof that the *Perſon* appearing is Chriſt. We explain'd the Type before, *Chap.* i. 15. nor needs any Variation of the Phraſe detain us to make any Addition.

5. We have an Account how his Hand was employed, *He had in his Hand a little Book open.* This is the Paſſage occaſions moſt Trouble to the Learned; and here I ſhall beg Pardon a little to follow them, and examine their Thoughts.

Some tell, This Book contain'd in it all the *Emergents* were to fall out in the *Church* after the *Book* with the *ſeven Seals* was off the Field; and that the former was ſealed,

becauſe it concerned the *Church*; but this is open, becauſe the Interpretation belongs to her Enemies. This Ground ſeems unable to bear the Superſtructure they reer upon it, for theſe Reaſons, 1. The Enemies of the Church are no leſs concern'd with the Contents of the *ſealed Book* than the Church herſelf, as we have ſeen. 2. It is not to ſpeak according to the Diſcoveries of God's covenanted Love to his Church, who communicates his *Secrets to them that love him*, and yet would lock up what chiefly concerned them; but, beſides, the Argument is childiſh, when the ſealed Book was opened before this appeared. 3. What follows, no leſs concerns the *Church* than her *Enemies*. 4. The Contents of that ſealed Book are not yet abſolved; for the *ſeventh Seal* contains the *ſeven Trumpets*, whereof only ſix had ſounded yet. And, to be ſure, they ſhould bring more than their Word, to tell us the Contents of this Book are abruptly broken off, and the reſt of them reſerved for another Volume: Nay, we are very confident, the *ſealed Book* contain'd in it all the notable Events to the End of the World; our Grounds we gave before, and we have a new one in this Chapter, *v.* 7. *In the Days of the Voice of the ſeventh Trumpet, when he ſhall begin to ſound, the Myſtery of God ſhall be finiſhed.*

Another famous Thought about this *Book* is, That it is the ſame with the *ſealed* Book, with this Difference, that it was *ſealed before*, but now that the Seals are looſed, it is *open*: And that it is called a *Little Book*, is becauſe the *Seals* were off, and ſome of the Scrolls, and ſo it was much leſs than before; and that we read of none to whom the *Lamb* delivered the Book, and ſo, 'tis preſumeable, he yet held it, even when open. There are a great many who ſubſcribe to this Opinion, without examining the Reaſons on which it is built; for the *Seals* might be looſed, and yet hung at the Book; or, even ſuppoſing them removed, they would make no Alteration in its Bulk, but rather ſwell it as a looſe Scroll is always more bulky than what is handſomly wrapt up. That ſome of the *Scrolls* were removed, they ſhould certainly bring a good Voucher for this, or not alledge it. That we did not hear of any to whom the *Lamb* had given it: Anſwer, It was not neceſſary: Beſides, it is not ſaid he held it; nor is there any Thing here in the Expreſſion, to inſinuate ſo much as a Probability, the Book was the ſame; and Chriſt having altered his Type from a *Lamb* to an *Angel*, it is very probable, under this new Appearance, he would have another Book and it is called a *little Book*, which *John* was to eat, for weighty Reaſons we ſhall afterwards hear; but no Reaſon can be given, why he ſhould eat the Prophecy either in Whole or in Part.

Others again tell us, This *Book* was juſt an open *Scroll*, and contained no more than the *Words* of the Proclamation the *Angel* made; as we ſee *Heraulds*, when they come to the *Croſs* to publiſh any Edict, bring along with them an *authentick Copy* of what they proclaim; and that this they do, both for their *Warrant*, and as a *Monitor*. But here there was no Occaſion for it, on any of theſe Accounts; for this *Angel* needed no Warrant, his glorious Appearance was ſufficient: And as little did he want a *Monitor*, who is incapable of *Miſtake* or *Neglect*. Beſides, for what End did *John* get this Book to *eat*? If this were all it contain'd, could theſe aſſiſt him in *Prophecying*? as is ſaid afterwards.

I incline therefore to join theſe who make this a *diverſe* Book from the *ſealed*, and think it to be the *Goſpel*, or the Doctrine of Salvation; which is a Book that all, both Miniſters and private Chriſtians, ſhould *eat*, to fit them for their ſeveral Works: This is that Book which is able to make the *Man of God perfect, and fit for every good Word and Work*. This will be more clear, when we view what is here ſaid of it. As,

(1.) The *Truths of God* are in a *Book*, to ſhew theſe are not ambulatory, but firm and ſtedfaſt. *The Word of the Lord endureth for ever*; Heaven and Earth my paſs away, but it ſhall remain, *not one Jot of it can paſs away till all of it be fulfilled.*

(2.) They are ſaid to be in a *little Book*, to ſhew us the Terms of Salvation are comprized in *little Bulk*, and may be eaſily read and underſtood; the moſt ignorant, with little Study, may know *God in Chriſt*, and theſe Things that belong to his everlaſting Peace. There is no Study but requires Application, but this may be ſooner compaſſed than any other.

(3.) It is ſaid of this Book, *It is open*. *Antichriſt* ſhut it up, and endeavoured to pollute it, but it was never in his Power to effectuate this Piece of Wickedneſs; By the Will of Chriſt it is to continue *open*. The Papiſts are like their Authors the *Phariſees*, who *took away the Key of Knowledge* from the People; but our Lord gives Acceſs to all to ſearch the Scriptures, becauſe only therein eternal Life is to be had: And, as the Apoſtle ſays, 2 *Cor.* iv. 3. *If our Goſpel be hid, it is hid unto them that are loſt.*

(4.) It

(4.) It is added, *He held it in his Hand.* Chriſt is the great Diſpenſer of the Word of Life; and that he holds it, is to diſcover how much he is concerned for the Preſervation thereof, it being the ſtated Mean of bringing Souls to Heaven: And whatever Efforts Satan may make to rob the Church of this *precious Jewel,* it ſhall not be in his Power; Yea, whatever Methods *Hereticks* may take to obſcure the true Senſe of it, yet he will open it up, and make his *Truths* to ſhine in their *Native Beauty.* And finally, he holds it in his *Hand,* that he may add thereto his Divine Efficacy, to make it effectual; for the Fruitfulneſs of the Word depends intirely upon the Concurrence of our bleſſed Lord: For otherwiſe, it may make Hearers *inexcuſable,* but will not prove *ſaving.*

When all theſe are put together, this Emblem diſcovers to us, that now, after the Blowing of the ſixth Trumpet, the *Goſpel would have free Courſe and be glorified*: There will not then be ſo many uſeleſs Sermons in the World, as formerly; *The Fields will then be white unto Harveſt, nor will he want Labourers.*

III. This *Angel's* wonderful Poſture, *He ſet his Right-foot upon the Sea, and the Left upon the Earth.* Where I ſhall conſider, in order to come to the Senſe of this, theſe Things, 1. The Places. 2. His Deed. 3. The Order of this Deed.

1. The Places, *Sea,* and *Earth.* There are a Multitude of different Thoughts about this, which I neither mention nor refute; there is a Paſſage in this ſame Prophecy gives more Light unto it, than any Thing I ſee, *Chap.* xiii. 1. One *Beaſt came out of the Sea*; that Beaſt is generally underſtood of the *Pope,* and all that appertains to his idolatrous Worſhip. Now, it is not a hard Thing to tell that *Sea* is not taken literally; and, if we would know what the Meaning of it is, conſider where the *Pope* had his Riſe: Was it not in *Europe*? whereof *Italy* is a very conſiderable Part. And, in *v.* 11. of that Chapter, we find another *Beaſt* riſe out of the *Earth*: Now, if by this *Beaſt* we underſtand *Mahomet,* then by the *Earth* we are to mean *Aſia,* for *Arabia* is a very notable Part of it. And ſo, by the *Sea,* we are to mean that *Region* of the World where *Popery* prevails; and, by the *Earth,* that Part thereof where *Mahometaniſm* prevails. This alſo may get Light from the Prophet *Haggai,* Chap. ii. 6. *I will ſhake the Heavens, the Earth, and the Sea.* And juſt ſo, the Pſalmiſt, propheſying of the Kingdom of Chriſt, calls to the whole Earth, *Pſal.* xcvii. 1. *The Lord reigneth, let the Earth rejoice, and the Multitude of the Iſles be glad thereof.* All own, that the Call is to the habitable World: Now, when the Weſtern Part of the World is conſidered, it looks but like a Multitude of *Iſles,* in Compariſon of the *Eaſt,* which conſiſts of a prodigious extended Continent; and we may well reckon a great Part of *Europe* but *Iſles* or *Peninſula's.*

2. His Deed, *He ſet,* which is a Word that denoteth Care and Deliberation; it was not a raſh Step, but the Effect of deliberate Counſel and Reſolution. It is alſo an Act that notes Stability; ſo we have it expreſt, *Pſal.* cxxii. 2. *Our Feet ſhall ſtand within thy Gates, O Jeruſalem.* Chriſt then is to ſettle his Goings in the World; and, 'tis to be obſerved, he firſt ſet down his *Feet burning like a Fire,* that he may conſume his Enemies, and then he gives the *little Book* to his Servants. He will execute his Temple-Vengeance upon them, and then make his Name known: The Meaning of his Feet we had above, *Chap.* i. 15.

3. The Order he moves in, he ſet *firſt* his *Right-foot* upon the *Sea,* and then he ſet his *Left-foot* upon the *Earth.* Here I will get a Multitude of the Learned on my Top, who ſay, That as the Goſpel was firſt propagate from the *Eaſt* to the *Weſt,* ſo, when the *Kingdom of Chriſt* comes with Power and Glory on the Earth, it will march that ſame Way. But a Body would wiſh more than their Word. I ſhall give a plain Text of Scripture where the ſame Order is obſerved, *Iſa.* lix. 19. *So ſhall they fear the Name of the Lord from the Weſt, and his Glory from the Eaſt.* And ſo, if we have hit the Meaning of this, after ſome others, this denotes the Method of Chriſt's Procedure; he will firſt weaken the Power of *Antichriſt,* and promote the Reformation in the Weſt; and will after that carry his Power againſt *Antichriſt* in the Eaſt: This hath in Part happened; And, that this great Work may be brought to a ſpeedy and glorious Iſſue, is what all of us, and all the Lord's People, ſhould pray for.

3 And cried with a loud Voice, as when a Lion roareth: And when he had cried, ſeven Thunders uttered their Voices.

4 And when the ſeven Thunders had uttered their Voices, I was about to write; and I heard a Voice from Heaven ſaying unto me, Seal up thoſe Things which the Thunders uttered, and write them not.

In this terrible Alarm we have to conſider, 1. The Nature thereof. 2. The Conſequents with reſpect to the Prophet. From the Words themſelves, it is obvious how little Satisfaction can be had in the Explication of this.

I. The Nature of this *Alarm*, where we can only conſider what is before us, and give the Conjectures of the Learned. Here then we have, 1. The Warners, which are of two Sorts. 2. The Manner of the Warning. But we ſhall view each Warner, and his Voice ſeparately, and as in the Text.

1. The firſt Warner is that Angel we have been hearing of, Jeſus Chriſt; tho' here he cried in the Emblem, yet we are not to expect his perſonal Voice on Earth, till the *Day of Judgment*. All his Voice now, is either by his *Word* in our Ears, his *Spirit* in our Hearts, or his *Providence* to all our Senſes: I conceive this to be meant of the laſt; and the Reaſon for it is, here he is ſpeaking to his Enemies: And yet, we muſt allow ſome introductory Warning to theſe fatal Blows will be given under the *ſeven Vials*, which I take to be the Intendment of this. But, whatever theſe will be, it ſeems it is his Pleaſure the World be ignorant of them, till they come.

There is the Voice of the Angel, *He cried with a loud Voice, as when a Lion roareth.* All the other and former *Trumpets*, who ſounded Alarms in the Ears of *Babylon*, were not liſtned to; and now this is one of the laſt Warnings they are to meet with. Here I ſhall conſider, 1. His Cry. And, 2. The Manner of his Cry.

(1.) It is ſaid, *He cried.* I am ſurprized to find Expoſitors ſay, This was an inarticulate Sound; which is a manifeſt Reflexion on our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, who always ſpoke ſenſibly. Sometimes indeed he was pleaſed to hide from his captious Enemies, the *Spirit* and *Life* of his *Speech*, under dark and obſcure Parables; but this he did in the Days of his Humiliation, on Purpoſe to raiſe Deſire in his Diſciples to know the Matter, and ſtave off his Enemies till his Time came: But here I cannot ſee any Ground for it. Beſides, they do a notable Violence to the Word κραζω, often uſed in the New Teſtament, but never to expreſs an inarticulate Sound; and, becauſe it is not mentioned what he ſaid, to conclude it an inarticulate Voice, they might as well draw the ſame Inference from the *Voices* of the *Thunders*, for as little is it recorded what they ſaid, and yet we are ſure the Apoſtle underſtood them, becauſe he was reſolved to write what they had uttered. We find it indeed uſed to expreſs Paſſions, whether of *Grief, Fear, or Indignation*: If we apply it to the laſt of theſe, for the two firſt have no Place here; then it is not inarticulate, for it gave a plain Account of his Diſpleaſure.

(2.) The Manner of it expreſſed, 1. By the Loudneſs, *with a loud Voice.* This we had frequently; and ſo, conſidering the Poſition of the *Angel*, this Voice will be heard far and near, *i. e.* both Weſt and Eaſt will hear it. 2. By a Compariſon, as *when a Lion roareth.* This is a moſt ſtartling Cry: Some contend, the Original μυκαω ſignifies properly to low like an Ox; and here a Myſtery is made, tho' Chriſt has the Strength of an *Angel*, he has the Patience of an *Ox*. But theſe ſhould have read the Text, for there is little the Sign of Patience, when he ſwears, Time ſhall be no longer. Others again tell from *Plutarch*, That the Lion, when he hath catched his Prey, calls upon the young Whelps, after the Manner of a *Cow* or *Ox*: Here alſo a Myſtery is found; Chriſt is now ready to devour the Prey, and therefore he calls upon others to feed; and theſe are the *Thunders*, who accordingly anſwer. This is very curious, but not ſo ſolid. I confeſs, under the *ſixth Vial*, there is a Proclamation made to the *Fowls of the Air*, &c. *Chap.* xix. 17. *to come and feed*: But, to make thoſe *Thunders* an Emblem of them, even tho' the *Trumpets* and *Vials* were the ſame, I think a ſtrange Way of interpreting Scripture; Beſides, we do not hear of any Thing theſe wild Creatures anſwered. After all, 'tis agreed, by a great many well-verſed in the *Greek* Authors, that this Word is often uſed to expreſs the *Roaring of a Lion*; and thus I think we are to take it here: And ſo I find the Judgments of God compared to the Roaring of a Lion, *Iſa.* xxxi. 4. *Like as the Lion and the young Lion roaring on his Prey, when a Multitude of Shepherds is called forth againſt him, he will not be afraid of their Voices, nor abaſe himſelf becauſe of them: So ſhall the Lord of Hoſts come down and fight for Mount Zion, and for the Hill thereof.* And juſt ſo, *Jeremiah* ſays, *Chap.* xxv. 30. *The Lord ſhall roar from on high, and utter his Voice from his holy Habitation, he ſhall roar mightily againſt the Inhabitants of the Earth.* And in ſeveral other Places beſides. I am ready to believe this is the ſafeſt Interpretation; and ſo, this *Cry* of the *Angel* is a bloody Threatning againſt the Enemies of his Church, which by an Oath he ſwears ſhall not be delayed. But what the Providence will be ſhall carry this terrible Advertiſement to them, we canot divine.

2 The next Sort of Warners are the *Thunders*, *The ſeven Thunders uttered their Voices*; or, as ſome chooſe to render it, *Theſe ſeven Thunders ſpoke their Voices.* We read many a Time of Thunder, both *natural* and *ſupernatural*, in Scripture; but there

there is a Sort of Perſonality aſcribed to *theſe Thunders*. The Apoſtle, by ſpecial Orders from Heaven, has given a very ſhort Account of them; nor may we with Safety determine any Thing: Only I ſee not how they can ſignify *Goſpel-miniſters*, as many incline to think; for we never hear they were forbid to publiſh their Commiſſion, or any one diſcharged to do it for them, as we find in the next Verſe. They ſeem to be as far from it, who would have theſe *ſeven Thunders* to be the *ſeven Angels* with the ſeven laſt Plagues of God; For, why ſhould they be made a Myſtery here, and in five or ſix Chapters after fully revealed? There is certainly no Reaſon to ſupport this. But, whatever they be, we find they were *Seven in Number*; they ſpoke *diſtinctly*, as well as *audibly*; and it would appear they had each a ſeveral Speech, and ſpoke by Turns, elſe he could not have underſtood them.

II. The Conſequents of theſe Warnings, *viz.* The Apoſtle's Purpoſe, and the Diverſion he meet with therefrom, *v.* 4.

1. We have the Apoſtle's Deſign when he heard theſe *Thunders*, *I was about to write*. This plainly gives the Importance of the Thing, and proves that the Apoſtle underſtood it, elſe it is not ſuppoſable he could be capable to write the ſame: But what the Contents of their *Speeches* were, I ſee not how we can reach, ſeeing they are not revealed. Some ſay, They contained ſomething in Favours of the Church: Others tell us, They were terrible Threatnings againſt her Enemies. Theſe Things ſeem not to me to differ much; yet, with all Reſpect, I think both are at a Loſs, for they have no Ground from the Text. Others again fetch a more ſubtil Difficulty; for they imagine *John* was not now in a *Writing Poſture*, which they think cannot be reconciled with an *Extaſy*. But here we need not perplex ourſelves; for the Words will import no more than he was deſigned to write the Words, and gave that Attention to them was needful for this End; and ſo we may eaſily get rid of this Perplexity.

2. We have the Diverſion he met with, which put a Check to this Purpoſe: Where we are to notice, 1. The Interrupter. 2. The Interruption.

(1.) The Interrupter, *A Voice from Heaven*. We are not told of the *Speaker*, and therefore we cannot determine about it, whether it was from the *Throne*, or from ſome of the *Elders* or *Living Creatures*; for, conſidering the Theatre of Viſion, any of theſe was ſufficient Warrant for him to keep as a Secret what was revealed to him: Yet it is moſt probably the *Voice of God*.

(2.) We have the Interruption in two Expreſſions, any of them might have been ſufficient to divert him from his Purpoſe; 1. *Seal up theſe Things which the ſeven Thunders have uttered*. Where he is not forbid to tell whether there were Thunders; the Prohibition is to reveal what the Thunders had uttered, elſe we had had no mention about them at all. The great Difficulty is about the Command, *To ſeal up theſe Things*; which we find indeed to have different Significations in Scripture, as to *ſeal* or *conceal for a Time*, without any Limitation of the Time of Publication; ſo the Prophet is adviſed, *Dan.* viii. 26. *Shut thou up the Viſion, for it ſhall be for many Days*. I confeſs I ſee not a Limitation of Time, ſo much as of the Thing here. It is indeed more plain afterwards, *Dan.* xii. 4. *O* Daniel, *ſhut up the Words, and ſeal the Book, even unto the Time of the End*. But when all the Parts of that Prophecy are laid together, it will be found, againſt the Time of opening of the Seal, that Generation would be nothing the better of the Senſe of it: And if we ſhall take it ſo here, it will be the ſame as not to reveal it at all. Again, we find to ſeal a Thing, is but to communicate it to few, and not make it publick; ſo the Lord ſays to the Prophet, *Iſa.* viii. 16. *Bind up the Teſtimony, ſeal the Law among my Diſciples*, i. e. Let none know of it but my People; for to them it might be revealed for their Comfort, but from others it was to be concealed. Again, we find to ſeal a Thing, is to keep quite ſecret, till there be a new Order about it, or ſome ſent to open the Seals: And in this Senſe we have it taken, *Chap.* v. 1. where the ſealed Book is illegible, till the Seals thereof were opened. Till I ſee better Reaſon, I am very apt to believe the laſt is the Senſe of the Phraſe in this Place; from whence we may obſerve, there are ſome ſpecial Friends of God honoured with Secrets, that they may not communicate to others: Such a Diſcovery as this the Apoſtle *Paul* had, *viz. A Viſion which it was not lawful for him*, &c. 2 *Cor.* xii. 4. Again, Miniſters are not to diſcloſe all they know; it is ſufficient they diſcover what makes for Edification, and which they are ordered of God to publiſh, elſe they may be guilty of *caſting Pearls before Swine*. I own, I cannot ſee the Senſe many ſet up for, *Write not theſe here in this Order, but reſerve them for another Time*. Where they'll find Ground for this, I know not; I am pretty confident it is not in the Text: But the Deſign of this Fetch is, to make the Angels who have the Vials, the ſame with the *Thunders*. Were there Ground in the Text, why not; but ſeeing there is not the leaſt

Evidence, why ſhould People perplex themſelves about groundleſs Propoſitions? Nor indeed do I ſee we ſhould be one Jot the wiſer, were this allowed; and it would be to advance ſome hard Thing about the moſt wiſe and excellent Majeſty, that it looks not well to refuſe the Revelation of ſomething at this Time, which he found convenient afterwards to diſcover; eſpecially that the Type comes in here ſo naturally, and no Reaſon why it is not revealed here, nor why it is afterwards manifeſted according to them, till *Chap.* xvi. I confeſs this is not a very pungent Argument; for few People go further wrong than theſe who reaſon from the Nature of God, becauſe a very ſmall Part of him is known, and no Argument can be good *ab ignoto*: And yet I think there is ſome Force in what I have advanced. I find another Author very wide too, for he ſays, If *John* might not write, it is becauſe he did not underſtand them: This is to paſs Sentence before a Hearing. It is owned by all, that *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, and others, did write from the Mouth of God what themſelves did not underſtand; and yet that is no Reaſon to reject their Writings as the Word of God; yea, I rather think, they prove them to be divinely inſpired: But here, with all Submiſſion, I am ready to think the Apoſtle did underſtand the Voices of the Thunders, elſe he would not have been ſo reſolute to write them; but all theſe Things are at a Venture. 2*d* Expreſſion is, *Write them not*: Some again make an Addition, and read it, *Write them not now*; for they imagine he did publiſh them afterwards. We ſhould be tender of Additions: I think therefore it is an abſolute Prohibition to write them *now* or *afterwards*; and ſo it is the greateſt Raſhneſs, to aſſert theſe *Thunders* to be the *Vials* after-mentioned.

5 And the Angel which I ſaw ſtand upon the Sea, and upon the Earth, lifted up his Hand to Heaven;

6 And ſware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created Heaven, and the Things that therein are; and the Earth, and the Things that therein are; and the Sea, and the Things which are therein, that there ſhould be Time no longer.

7 But in the Days of the Voice of the ſeventh Angel, when he ſhall begin to ſound, the Myſtery of God ſhould be finiſhed, as he hath declared to his Servants the Prophets.

In this Edict we have to notice, beſides the *Publiſher* (of which before) theſe Things; 1. The Manner of Publication, with the Solemnity of an Oath. 2. The Matters depoſed.

I. The Manner of Publication, in Form of a ſolemn Oath: Where is to be noticed, 1. The Rite. 2. The ſolemn Oath.

1. The *Rite*. We find many *Rites* uſed of old in *Swearing*, both by God and Man: We only conſider this in our View, *He lifted up his Hand to Heaven*. This has been a very old Cuſtom in Swearing; and, becauſe of the Appropriation of this Rite, we find it commonly taken for *Swearing*, Gen. xiv. 22. Abraham *ſaid unto the King of* Sodom, *I have lifted up my Hand unto the Lord, the moſt high God, Poſſeſſor of Heaven and Earth*. And the Lord ſays, *Numb.* xiv. 30. *Ye ſhall not come into the Land, concerning which I ſware to make you dwell therein*, originally, *lifted up my Hand*. We find the Expreſſion often uſed of God, *Deut.* xxxii. 40. *I lift up my Hand to Heaven, and ſay, I live for ever*. But we have another Text, to which I think this plainly alludes, becauſe it is the Deed of the *Mediator*, Dan. xii. 7. *I heard the Man which was clothed with Linen, which was upon the Waters of the River, when he held up his Right-hand and his Left-hand to Heaven, and ſware*. It is not ſaid here, whether the *Right* or *Left-hand*, or both, was lifted up, and ſo we are to make no Debate: I only remark, this ſeems to be the moſt agreeable *Ceremony*, in this Piece of *Worſhip*; for thereby the Deponent makes an immediate Appeal to God, whoſe Throne is in the Heavens, and calls him to join him in his Teſtimony, or puniſh him for his Perfidy.

2. The Oath itſelf; where we have the *Tye*, *He ſware*. It is owned by the Learned, the Word is of a *Chaldaick* Original, and properly ſignifies *to bind* or *engage*: It is a moſt ſolemn Obligation. That which we are moſt to notice is, by whom he ſwears, *By him that liveth for ever and ever, who created Heaven*, &c. There is no doubt but the Oath is by God, and that in the moſt ſolemn Manner; and I think, before, I made it plain that Chriſt is the Deponent: So that nothing remains now, but that we notice this auguſt Deſcription of God, which might be done at great Length, but we ſhall paſs it over very ſhortly; yet ſtill ſo, as ſhew a great many of his glorious Perfections

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are wrapt up herein, in these Particulars, 1. His *Eternity*, *He liveth for ever and ever.* We had this Expression, *Chap.* iv. 9, 10. where we shewed God to be meant thereby, as without Beginning or End of Days. 2. In the same Phrase is comprehended his *Independency*: For, if Eternal, then Independent; for he could be produced by none, and so could not depend upon any. 3. His *Omnipotency* in the Works of Creation, which are here distribute into three several Ranks, of *Heaven*, the *Earth*, and *Sea*; for all these are the Works of his Hands. 4. His *Infinite Wisdom*, that had disposed of all the Creatures in these *three Elements*, where there is the greatest Variety and Concordance imaginable; and shews that all of them depend on God their Sole Author. 5. His *Providence*: As these Creatures owed their Being to him, so also their Preservation and Government; for God ceases not to order them all for the several and great Ends for which they were appointed: And therefore, I see not how we can expect a shorter or more comprehensive Account of the Divine Nature. And hence we may conclude, this is a most *solemn Oath*, and exactly to the Pattern laid down by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Chap. iv. 2. *Thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth in Truth, in Judgment, and in Righteousness.* We might easily apply all the Parts of this Text to the present *Oath*, from the several Parts thereof; but it is so plain, we need not dwell thereon. As for these Reasons fetched from the Form of the Oath, to prove this to be a *created Angel*; I am very unconcerned about them, till they disprove the Characters here given to the *Swearer*, which I alledge can be bestowed upon none but Christ.

II. The *Matters deposed*; which we cannot allow to be *trivial*, after such a solemn Invocation of God. They are, 1. A Declaration, *v.* 6. 2. An Illustration, *v.* 7. Before I enter on them, it seems plain the *Swearer* had these Effects in his own Power; for it would be the *greatest Rashness* (to give it no worse Name) to one to swear that which is not simply in his Power; for *assertory Oaths* differ from *promissory*: And here the *Angel* is not so much bearing *Testimony* to a previous Truth; that also indeed is plain in the Close of *v.* 7. But the Stress of the Oath is *promissory*, and therefore we must yield the Accomplishment is intirely in his Power. And further, it notes a serious and fixed *Purpose*: And now, when his Will and Power (which here are said to conspire) be one, what is capable to stand in the Way, or obstruct the same? But we view these two.

1. He swears, *Time shall be no longer*; or, nearer the Original, *Time shall not be now*: Or, as others judge, *Opportunity shall not be now.* A great many understand this of the End of Time, as if he had said, Now *Time* is to be swallowed up of *Eternity*, the End of all Flesh is come. I own there is something in the Expression that tastes a little of this, yet there is more in the Context against it, which I think we are obliged to humour, if we would come to the Sense of the Prophecy. I offer these Reasons against this Sense, 1. The *seventh Trumpet* is yet to *sound*, and that must certainly preceed the Consummation of all Things: Nor will the End of the World fall out under that Trumpet, because after *Babylon* is destroyed, the Church is to enjoy a *thousand Years* Repose without any Disturbance, for *Satan* will be bound all that Time: And after that Period is elapsed, there will be a notable Defection, as we will hear, *Chap.* xx. And upon the Back of that cometh the End, but not sooner. 2. The second Thing deposed, *viz. The Mystery of God shall be finished*; tells us plainly, that the End of Time is not to be found here, else we must make the *Mystery of God* to be finished after the Day of Judgment, *i. e. Babylon* must fall after that, and the Church must increase and prevail; for these two, as we shall see, make up a great Part of this *Mystery*. 3. To be sure we must fetch the Sense of this Proposition from the preceeding Part of the Prophecy, and this, I think, will make our Work very easy. Before then we have these three Things, Three persecuting Enemies flying in the Face of the Church, and laying out themselves to the utmost to undo her. After this we have six moderate, yet some of them pretty sharp, Judgments inflicted upon these Enemies, in order to bring them to a better Mind; and all this without any other Effect, than to render them inexcusable. What then can we make the Sense of this Proposition to be? but this, *I will not suffer my Church to be more molested by these incorrigible Enemies, who have so long, without Remorse, made Havock of them: Nor will I use more Methods to reduce these Enemies, who are now become desperately Wicked, in spite of all Means, whether of Mercy or Judgment; but will now let fly the last Efforts of my Justice, and cut them off by the Vials. My Spouse shall no more be in such an uncertain Condition, nor shall her Enemies prevail or triumph over her any longer.* Nor does this want Countenance from other *Scriptures*, to justify the Phrase: The Prophet *Isaiah* says, and against *literal Babylon*, which makes it the more observable, *Isa.* xiii. 22. *Her Time is near to come, and her Days shall not be prolonged.* We have also the same Word χρονος rendered *Space*, Chap. ii. 21. *I gave her* [Jezabel] *Space*

to repent. Now, let us but turn it ſo here, and the Matter is done, I ſwear, *Babylon ſhall have no more Space, her End is come:* Nor can I ſee any Reaſon againſt this, or for the other Opinion, which has any Shew or Appearance of Strength. Nay, theſe who maintain it, own this Opinion is plauſible; but they haſten too faſt to the End of the World upon all Occaſions, and have not Patience to wait the Finiſhing of the *Myſtery of God,* which we are next to conſider.

2. There is an Illuſtration of that ſhort Sentence advanced before, and to point out to us what is to be expected, *v.* 7. It is not to be doubted but this points at a moſt notable Change, but how it is to be fulfilled in Heaven, is more than I can fathom; eſpecially that it is ſaid, It is to be according to the Declaration God had made to his Servants the Prophets; all of which we know concern the *temporal State of the Church,* and the ſeveral Members thereof. This very Conſideration has forced Mr. *Marck,* and a great many others, to quit ſo much of their Scheme, as allow the temporal Condition of the Church to be alſo couched up here, tho' they drive on their main Cauſe. That we may come to the Senſe of this, it will be needful we conſider the ſeveral Parts of this Verſe, which we ſhall do with all Brevity, 1. The great Subject of this Prophecy, *The Myſtery of God.* 2. That which is ſworn about it, *It ſhall be fulfilled.* 3. The Time when this is to fall out, *When the ſeventh Trumpet ſhall begin to ſound.* 4. The Rule and Meaſure to be obſerved in the Accompliſhment of this Part of the Prophecy, and alſo the Ground of the Faith of the Saints, *As God hath declared to the Prophets.*

(1.) The great Subject of this *Prophecy*; and not only of this particular Clauſe of the Oath, but indeed of the whole Book, *The Myſtery of God.* And the Way of expreſſing it, aſſures us it is a moſt *comprehenſive Myſtery*; and will take in its Comprehenſion all theſe Viſions and Emblems God was pleaſed to favour *John* with, for the Behoof of the Church. As for the Word *Myſtery* or *Secret,* I ſpoke of it before, *Chap.* i. 20. It is properly a *New Teſtament* Word, tho' there be Expreſſions in *the Old* that perfectly correſpond thereto, which we will have Occaſion afterwards to mention. In this Place, the Thing is advanced with a notable *Emphaſis,* which declares the Greatneſs and *Excellency* of the Myſtery. I am not of Opinion, that the ranging of theſe Places of Scripture, where this or equivalent Expreſſions occur, would be either a ſpeedy or ſure Method of coming to the true Import and Signification of what is wrapt up in this Expreſſion here: But I imagine the moſt direct and ſatisfying Method is, to conſider what theſe *Myſteries* are, will have their Accompliſhment when the *ſeventh Trumpet ſoundeth*; which we have at once in our View, *Chap.* xi. from *v.* 15. to the Cloſe of the Chapter; which, as far as I can ſee yet through the Words, ſeem to have theſe Things therein. Nor do I ſee how this can be rejected, ſeeing the Contents of theſe five Verſes exactly meet the Words of the Angel's Oath, 1. The Spreading of the Goſpel among the *Gentiles,* and ſo *all the Kingdoms of this World will become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and his Chriſt.* 2. The utter Extirpation of *Antichriſt,* or of *ſpiritual Babylon*; or, as we deſigned them, *Heathen* and *Popiſh Idolatry,* and *Mahometan Deluſion.* And, 3. The Reduction of the *Jews to Chriſt.* All which makes up the whole Myſtery of God, that was revealed of old to the Prophets, and now to the beloved Apoſtle; and we are ſure all theſe will happen under the ſeventh Trumpet. Theſe may well be called *Myſteries,* for they have been ſo to the World from the Beginning, tho' not intirely ſo; for now and then God was pleaſed to let out ſomething of it to one at one Time, and ſomething to another at another Time: But in groſs, they yet remain Secrets and Myſteries to theſe Peoples and Nations that are moſt concerned in them. And if at a Time any clear Warning was given them, *Satan* ſtirred up ſome of themſelves, or ſome from the Proteſtant Camp, to ſuppreſs it, and turn, by the Force of Wit, all the Edge of this Prophecy off them; which I take to be a moſt heavy and judicial Stroke from God upon them.

(2.) That which the *Angel* ſwears about this Myſtery, *It ſhall be finiſhed,* or fulfilled, or accompliſhed: So we find the Word rendred, and truly according to the Scope of the Place, *Luke* xxii. 37. *I ſay unto you, that this that is written muſt yet be accompliſhed in me.* And again, *Luke* xviii. 31. *All Things that are written by the Prophets concerning the Son of Man ſhall be accompliſhed.* In which Senſe, I think, it ſhould be taken here; But that which moved many to render it *finiſhed,* is, becauſe they underſtood the End of the World to be the Meaning of the former Expreſſion: Yet, 'tis plain, this Word ſignifies no more than the bringing to paſs theſe great Things promiſed or threatned by God. But ſome tell us again, That when the *ſeventh Trumpet* ſhall begin to ſound, all this Myſtery will not be accompliſhed; for the whole *ſeven Vials* muſt be ſpent, before *Babylon* be utterly deſtroyed. I anſwer, It is very uſual in Scripture, to repreſent a Matter done, when it is a-doing: Nay, ſometimes we have the greateſt Events in the World

World repreſented as accompliſhed, before the moſt notable Steps be taken: Thus our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in that ſolemn Prayer to the Father, makes this Report, *John* xvii. 4. *I have finiſhed the Work thou gaveſt me to do*; And yet at that Time he was not apprehended: But the plain Reaſon is, He was fully determined with all Speed to ſet about it; yea, the Time alſo was near, and faſt approaching. This, I think, may be of Uſe to clear the Expreſſion in this Text.

(3.) The Time when this is to fall out, *In the Days of the Voice of the ſeventh Angel, when he ſhall begin to ſound.* Theſe two Expreſſions do not croſs one another, tho' the firſt ſays, Theſe Things ſhall happen when that *Period is running*, and the other ſays, *When it ſhall begin*; for indeed *Begin* is not in the Text: And to render it cloſs, it ſhould run, *When he ſounds*, and then both the Expreſſions are of one Latitude, and ſignify no more but that in the Compaſs of Time alloted to that *Trumpet*, all theſe wonderful Events will be brought about.

(4.) There is the Rule and Meaſure to be obſerved in the Accompliſhing of theſe Things, and alſo the Ground of Believers Faith, *As he hath declared unto his Servants the Prophets.* Tho' one might think this the plaineſt Part of the Text, yet it is much vexed by Expoſitors, preſſing it in to their ſeveral Purpoſes; and ſome, upon this Ground, that the Word our Tranſlators render *declared*, εὐηγγέλισε, ſignifies to preach the Goſpel, at leaſt to proclaim good Tidings; which, in my Opinion, ſerves much to give Light to the whole Words: For, can any Thing after the Declaration of the *Goſpel of Chriſt*, be better News than to underſtand his Kingdom will be great, and that all his Enemies ſhall be deſtroyed? But we would conſider the Words a little: Theſe Perſons to whom God was pleaſed to make ſuch a deſirable Revelation, or Declaration, are deſcribed by two notable Characters, 1. They are called *God's Servants*, i. e. ſuch as obey all his Commands, that wait upon him, and follow his Steps: This is common to all the *Godly*, for all of them are his Servants; 'tis true, theſe whom he imploys to his Church, in a more eminent Manner have a Title to this Deſignation. 2. *Prophets.* This, according to the *Greek*, ſignifies no more than to ſpeak from God, and for him; and, under the *New Teſtament*, is often applied to the ordinary Miniſters of the Goſpel: In which Senſe I ſee not how we can take it here, for all their Knowledge from God is in common by the *written Word*; but here it ſeems to point at an immediate Communication from God to them, becauſe God is made the *Preacher* or Revealer, and they are the *Hearers.* It is true, they got the Diſcovery of theſe Things for the Benefit and Advantage of the Church; yet, it is as true, we muſt underſtand this of theſe to whom God did immediately manifeſt theſe Things; which will not agree to ordinary Paſtors, whether under the Old or New Teſtament. It is alſo certain, that God did not honour all the *Prophets equally*: Some of them had larger Allowances of the Divine Favour than others; as we have the Lord declaring to *Aaron* and *Miriam*, Numb. xii. 6, 7, 8. *If there be a Prophet among you, I the Lord will make my ſelf known to him in a Viſion, and will ſpeak to him in a Dream. My Servant* Moſes *is not ſo, who is faithful in all mine Houſe; with him will I ſpeak Mouth to Mouth, even apparently, and not in dark Speeches.* Theſe are the Prophets of which this Text ſpeaks. And if it ſhould be asked, Whether we are to underſtand by theſe *Prophets*, theſe under the *Old Teſtament*, or theſe under the *New*? I make no Scruple to anſwer, *Both* are to be meant; and when we come afterwards to conſider the Particulars are contained in this *Myſtery of God*, we will find both of them have been let in to this Secret. This ſhews us what a notable Conſent is to be expected among all the Prophets, and alſo with what Confidence an Expoſitor may have Recourſe to the *old Prophets*, for the inveſtigating of many dark Paſſages in the *New*; and how unlikely they are to ſucceed, who quit the *Word of God*, and fetch Light to this Portion of holy Writ from the *Heathens*, who are Chriſt's ſworn Enemies, and from whom the Lord ſo often admoniſhed his People to abſtain, and borrow none of their Cuſtoms. Now, how ſhall we believe God would borrow any Thing himſelf from them? I ſhall only further notice, how ſome truly mock at this Senſe of the Words, and yet are not at Pains to refute what is advanced, for the Support of their own Opinion; and to own that this Notion is very ſpecious, and has apparently a great Congruity with *Rom.* xi. from *v.* 15. *&c.* and that many learned Men are of that Mind; all which may move One to think, it was their Work to diſprove theſe Appearances, and have engaged theſe learned Men, whom they preſume to have fondly run on in a Miſtake.

I have but one Opinion more to take Notice of, theſe who alledge, there is no Time here condeſcended on at all, *but only God reſerving to himſelf a Power of doing this or not, and at this Time or another.* Their Ground for this they fetch from the Words, which, I own, they tranſlate very cloſs, thus, at leaſt, as near it as I can bring *Latine* to *Engliſh*, *But in the Days of the Voice of the ſeventh Angel,*

when he ſhall ſound, and the Myſtery of God ſhall be finiſhed, &c. Whence they reaſon, That the finiſhing of the *Myſtery* of God, is no leſs a Time, or Term of Commencement, than the *Sounding of the Angel*; and they reckon it hard to take the natural Force from the Words: And hence they conclude, all is left in Uncertainty; and from this infer, all is an Amuſement. I ſhall notice this Difficulty a little; and, 1. I own the Verſion to be allowable, if they had obſerved the due Force of the Word ὅταν, *When*, before the Sounding of the Trumpet, with the Conjunction καὶ before the Finiſhing of the Myſtery; where, it is plain, the firſt fixes the Term, and ſo the laſt muſt be the Event: And, make what they will of καὶ, it is plain it cannot be jumbled with ὅταν, further, than to ſhew what follows this is to be an Event on the Back of the other, 2. We have here a ſolemn Oath: Now, if we make the whole Contents of the Oath to fix a Term, and yet that Term by two different Expreſſions weakning one another, and ſo, as they own, there be no fixed Time at all, I would fain know what is ſworn; I am ſure it is not poſſible for any Man to tell, unleſs they ſay nothing is fixed by this Time, but all left looſe. I am indeed aſhamed to expoſe this; for it carries ſomething ſo hard, as I cannot reconcile either with the Juſtice, Faithfulneſs, or Goodneſs of God: And therefore, I am of the Mind, our Tranſlation is to obtain, and the καὶ is not to be commenſurate with ὅταν, but to be a Preamble to that notable Event ſhall fall out at the Sound of that Trumpet.

From all I have ſaid, I think there is Reaſon to believe, this *Trumpet* is not yet begun to ſound, ſo long as theſe Events do not appear; and indeed, every Thing in the Courſe of this *Trumpet* ſeems plainly to prove this: But when this *Trumpet* will begin to ſound, and how many Years will be in that Period, we will not find ſo eaſy to determine, except from what Light may be expected from the *Eleventh Chapter*. But, I am ſure, from what is ſaid, we have a great Beam of Divine Light to comfort the Church under her wreſtling State; for that will come to an End, nor do we know how quickly.

8 And the Voice which I heard from Heaven, ſpake unto me again, and ſaid, Go, and take the little Book which is open in the Hand of the Angel which ſtandeth upon the Sea, and upon the Earth.

9 And I went unto the Angel, and ſaid unto him, Give me the little Book. And he ſaid unto me, Take it, and eat it up, and it ſhall make thy Belly bitter, but it ſhall be in thy Mouth ſweet as Hony.

10 And I took the little Book out of the Angel's Hand, and ate it up, and it was in my Mouth ſweet as Hony: And as ſoon as I had eaten it, my Belly was bitter.

11 And he ſaid unto me, Thou muſt propheſy again before many Peoples, and Nations, and Tongues, and Kings.

In this Conſequent of the Viſion, we are to notice, 1. A Voice directing the Apoſtle, *v.* 8. 2. The Apoſtle's Obedience to that Call, *v.* 9. at the Beginning. 3. The Words of this mighty Angel, upon his Obedience, alſo, *v.* 9. 4. The Experiment upon the Back of this, by the Apoſtle. 5. An expreſs Order ſubjoined by this great Angel.

I. There is a Voice directing the Apoſtle, *v.* 8. which gave Occaſion to what follows; where is, 1. The Voice. 2. The Orders.

1. The Voice or Speaker, *The Voice which I heard from Heaven, ſpake unto me again.* I do not ſee any Neceſſity to ſtruggle about this Speaker; it is plain *John* had a Voice from Heaven, *Chap.* iv. 1. but it is as plain, that was really the Voice of Chriſt; yet it is not called *a Voice from Heaven,* tho' we are ſure it was ſo, becauſe that *Voice called him to come up to Heaven.* We have another Voice, *v.* 4. which is expreſly ſaid to be from Heaven; but who the *Speaker* is, is not mentioned: Nor do I ſee any Neceſſity to fix who the *Speaker* is; only, I preſume, it is not this *great Angel,* whom we have afterwards giving due Orders to our Apoſtle. Yet I ſee not how we can make this an *ordinary Voice,* when it orders him to go to the *great Angel*; and ſo we may allow this Call to be from the *Throne,* which favours more of Authority and Reſpect put upon the *Son,* the *ſtrong Angel* here repreſented.

2. We have the Orders, *Go, and take the little Book which is open,* &c. All here is explained above, except the *two Imperatives, Go,* and *Take*; in which I ſee no Difficulty, but what thoughtful Men have created to themſelves and the World. The firſt

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notes Expedition, and Diligence, and has nothing of Diſdain in the Speaker, but Authority; the Apoſtle was not to delay, but yield immediate Obedience. The ſecond is as eaſy, *Take*, which hath nothing of Rudeneſs or Violence in it; and indeed, Force with this Angel, would have ſtood in no Stead: But, I think, the ſtrong Angel kept this Book, juſt as the Father did the ſealed Book, *Chap.* v. with a Mind to deliver it to whomſoever a Commiſſion ſhould be granted to demand the ſame, which we find our Apoſtle do in a very humble Manner.

II. We have the Apoſtle's Obedience to this Call, *v.* 9. where is his Motion, and his Deſire.

1. His Motion, *I went unto the Angel.* Here he makes no Delay, nor moves any Scruples, nor reaſons with Fleſh and Blood, whether it was ſafe or convenient, *&c.* but immediately he directs his Motion to the Angel, who, to be ſure, was not far of: We find this ſame ready Compliance in the Apoſtle *Paul*, Gal. i. 15, 16. *When it pleaſed God, who ſeparated me from my Mother's Womb, and called me by his Grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the* Heathen; *Then immediately I conferred not with Fleſh and Blood.* God's Commands muſt be yielded to, without Gain-ſaying; when the Call is clear, no Man, without the greateſt Danger, dare ſit it. No Objection taken, either from our own Unfitneſs, or the Difficulties may be in the Way, muſt ſlack our Pace.

2. The Apoſtle's Deſire, *Give me the little Book.* He does not offer to ſnatch it, but in a humble Manner requires it; yea, the Promiſe couched up in the Father's Command, is a great Encouragement, but does not hinder the Uſe of ſtated Means for obtaining of what was promiſed: Which ſhould be a Rule to us, and teaches us, that Promiſes and Commands are not deſigned to obſtruct Prayers, but rather to kindle our Fervour therein: Yea, having a Promiſe fortified with a Command, we ſhould pray with the greater Boldneſs or Confidence; for this *gives Acceſs with Boldneſs unto the Throne of Grace.*

III. There are the *Orders* of the *mighty Angel*, upon his Obedience, *v.* 9. alſo, which we have in two Commands, and an Information.

1. The firſt Command is a gracious Return of his Petition, *Take it*, which here ſeems to be more than the delivering of a demanded Thing; for we are to turn our Eyes back, and we will find this to be a *Book of Inſtructions* to the Apoſtle, and in him to all Miniſters of the Goſpel; ſo that it is a Delivery with Authority, and a Commiſſion going along therewith: Where I ſhall notice, for Edification, 1. Chriſt puts none away that comes to him in earneſt; nay, nor delays to anſwer them, when they ask agreeably to the Will of God. 2. All Goſpel-miniſters hold their Office immediately of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; neither *Pope*, *King* nor *Biſhop* has the Power of ſetting out *Church-officers.* 3. They have all their Inſtructions in that Book delivered by him; and this Book is open, not only for their Behoof, but alſo for the Satisfaction of all others, that they may not be impoſed upon: This is the Book of *Canons*, to which the meaneſt Hearer may challenge his Paſtor; who, if he ſpeak not according to what is therein, it is becauſe there is no Light in him.

2. The ſecond Command is a Direction about this Book, *Eat it up*; or, as the emphatick *Greek* Word ſignifies, *Swallow it*, or *devour it*, which hath ſomething of Greedineſs and Appetite wrapt up in it. This, to be ſure, is with Alluſion to what we have by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, Chap. ii. 8, 9. *Open thy Mouth, and eat that I give thee. And when I looked, behold, an Hand was ſent unto me, and, lo, the Roll of a Book was therein.* Ezek. iii. 1. *Moreover, he ſaid unto me, Son of Man, eat that thou findeſt, eat this Roll.* Nor is this the only Parallel; for the Prophet *Jeremiah* ſays, *Chap.* xv. 16. *Thy Words were found, and I did eat them.* And *Job* ſays to the ſame Purpoſe, *Chap.* xxiii. 12. *I have eſteemed the Words of his Mouth more than my neceſſary Food.* In this *Metaphor*, we have, 1. He was to have the *Word of God* in his Heart, and be well acquainted therewith. 2. He was to meditate upon the ſame; which, in *Paul*'s Words, is, *Give thy ſelf to theſe Things, and give thy ſelf to Meditation on theſe Things; and give thy ſelf wholly to them,* 1 *Tim.* iv. 13, 15. 3. He was to convert it into neceſſary Nouriſhment, both for his own Caſe, and for the Caſes of others: For Meat, when chewed and ſwallowed, if it be not digeſted, and turned into proper Juices for the ſeveral Parts of the Body, it will ſignify nothing. This Digeſtion is what the Apoſtle calls *a rightly dividing of the Word*, 2 Tim. ii. 15. We may then plainly obſerve, this ſhort Command contains the whole of a Miniſter's Duty about the Word of God.

3. There is an Information concerning this *Book*, Chriſt does not flatter his Servants, but tells them of the bitter and ſowre Part of their Work, as well as of the ſweet; *It ſhall make thy Belly bitter, but it ſhall be ſweet in thy Mouth as Hony.* I here ne-

gleſt all Expoſitors, and confine my ſelf to the *Word of God*, as the beſt Expoſitor of this. We have here two very different Guſto's of the Word of God; and, tho' the Mouth be what we have the firſt Reliſh of any Thing by, yet it is laſt mentioned, it may be, becauſe the firſt mentioned is what ſhould be moſt conſidered.

(1.) This Book *ſhall make thy Belly bitter*. This we find alſo in the Prophet *Ezekiel*, Chap. iii. 14. *I went in the Bitterneſs and Heat of my Spirit*. The Belly is the more inward Part of the Body, and ſometimes in Scripture is taken for the *Conſcience*, Job xx. 19, 20. *Becauſe he hath oppreſſed*, &c. *Surely he ſhall not feel Quietneſs in his Belly*. More ordinarily the *Belly* is taken for the Deſire and Affections, *Jer.* li. 34. *He hath filled his Belly with my Delicates*. Prov. xiii. 25. *The Righteous eateth to the ſatisfying of his Soul, but the Belly of the Wicked ſhall want*. So it ſeems to be meant here; it was afterwards *bitter* in his Heart or Affections: This may flow from the Senſe of his own Inſufficiency, from the manifold Difficulties he was to encounter, and from the Fruitleſneſs of the Goſpel. We ſee the Bitterneſs of *Jeremiah*'s Soul in many hard Expreſſions, which at Length brought him to this deſperate Reſolution, *Jer.* xx. 7,---10. *I ſaid, I will not make Mention of him, nor ſpeak any more in his Name*, &c. We find this very grievous to the Apoſtle, *Gal.* iv. 11. *I am afraid, leſt I have beſtowed upon you Labour in vain*. Alſo, great Bitterneſs of Mind ariſeth to Miniſters from the ſpreading of Errors, *v.* 17. *They zealouſly affect you, but not well; they would exclude you, that you might affect them*. I might alſo ſhew how *bitter* the Word is to Hearers, on Suppoſition of Conviction or Hardneſs; but, becauſe the Text ſeems to confine us, at leaſt chiefly, to *Miniſters*, I paſs it.

(2.) The next Effect of it was, what he would be firſt ſenſible of, *It ſhall be ſweet in thy Mouth as Hony*. This agrees exactly with what we have in *Ezekiel*, Chap. iii. 3. *Then did I eat it, and it was in my Mouth as Hony*. And the Pſalmiſt ſays, *Pſal.* xix. 10. *The Judgments of the Lord are ſweeter than the Hony, and the Hony-comb*. This is certainly true as to Miniſters; for, what can be more reliſhing than the *Truths of God* to their Minds? And it is no Leſs ſo to the Faithful, as we find the Church confeſs, *Song* iv. 11. *Hony and Milk are under thy Tongue*.

IV. The Apoſtle's Experiment upon the Back of this, did exactly anſwer the Warning, *v.* 10. the Terms are explained, and we ſhall touch at it in the Application a little further.

V. An expreſs Order by this mighty Angel to the Apoſtle, *v.* 11. where we are to notice, 1. The Command. 2. The Extent of it.

1. The Command, *Thou muſt propheſy again*. The Word *again* muſt help to the Meaning of the Precept; for by this he is ordered to do as he had done before. From this, ſome conclude, what follows in this Chapter, is all new, and a diverſe Prophecy from what we had before; and that this Order is with reſpect to the ſecond Prophecy which he was to publiſh. It is anſwered, *John* had not proclaimed the firſt Prophecy as yet, before any; ſo that this cannot be the Senſe. Beſides, we will find, what is in the ſubſequent Chapters, is but a Part of theſe Prophecies contained in the preceeding; nor have we any Aſſurance *John* ever preached either the one or the other of them. It is very probable, this Book of *Revelation* was committed to the Care of the Churches, but was not publiſhed till ſome Time after it was written, and, it may be, the Apoſtle was dead: So that ſomething elſe muſt be the Meaning of it. We are then to conſider what Sort of Propheſying *John* had, before both great and ſmall formerly, and we will find it was only to preach the Goſpel: In this Senſe, we have the Word frequently taken; ſo we read of the *Sons of* Aſaph, *who propheſied according to the Order of the King*, 1 Chron. xxv. 2. *i. e.* they taught or inſtructed the People: And ſo it is ſaid, *Prov.* xxix. 18. *Where there is no Viſion, the People periſh*. Here Viſion is the ſame with Teaching or Inſtructing, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 4. *He that propheſieth, edifieth the Church*. From this Exerciſe the Apoſtle had been reſtrained by Confinement, but before it was his Work.

2. The Extent of this Command, *Before many Peoples, and Nations, and Tongues, and Kings*. This, to be ſure, cannot be reſtricted to any one *Nation* or *People*; and therefore, I think, we had beſt extend it to all, in order to make all the Kingdoms *of the Earth* become the Kingdoms of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. We explained moſt of the Words above.

The great Queſtion about theſe four Verſes is, Of whom does the Prophet ſpeak here? of himſelf, or of ſome other?

Some underſtand this allenarly of the Apoſtle *John*, and that with reſpect to this Prophecy too: But I examined this. Others, who take Propheſying for ordinary Teaching, think it is meant of him, and that it is a comfortable Promiſe of Enlargement from this exiled Condition. I am not to doubt but he might have ſuch a Promiſe, but, that

that this perſonal Mercy would be incorporate with the publick Viſion, I cannot believe: For here, all this Viſion concerns the whole *Church*, and eſpecially that Period of the Church under the *ſeventh Trumpet*; and therefore it is more reaſonable to believe that *John* here is the Emblem of all the *Miniſtry* which ſhould exiſt about that Time; and that the *Spirit* which was in this *Apoſtle* will be beſtowed upon that *Miniſtry*, juſt as we read of the *Spirit* of *Elias* being in *John Baptiſt*, and as the Keys of Diſcipline were given by Name to *Peter*, yet were as really beſtowed upon the *reſt* of the *Apoſtles*, yea, and their Succeſſors, the ordinary Governors of the Church, as upon him. This Meaning I ſhall endeavour to eſtabliſh by a few Conſiderations.

1. From the Time that this Command is to take Effect: It is not in *John*'s Time, nor for many Hundreds of Years after; but, at ſooneſt, after the Sounding of the *ſixth Trumpet*, and it may be but a little before the Sounding of the ſeventh, which I think is not yet come.

2. This Apoſtle had long before eaten up this open Book, and had propheſied agreeable to the Tenor thereof. Now, it is not reaſonable to think another *Goſpel* was given him to ſtudy; for it muſt be the ſame he had, with great Succeſs, for many Years propagate: So that this is to be meant of another *Miniſtry*, yet to exiſt, and which this promiſes ſhall be a true apoſtolick Miniſtry.

3. I ſee not how we can pitch upon any Interruption to the Spreading of the Goſpel in *John*'s Time, to which this may be applicable; for tho' he himſelf was baniſhed and under Confinement, yet the *Word of God was not impriſoned*, for he could write to the Churches as well as the other Apoſtles: And beſides, there were a great Number of Evangeliſts and ordinary Miniſters at Liberty, whom we may not think were idle; And we find ſeverals of theſe in the Churches to which he directs his Letters.

4. The Extent of this Command ſeems to be larger than that it ſhould be poſſible for *John*, an old Man, yea, or any other, however young, to accompliſh: For the Teaching of a Multitude of Nations, *&c.* would require the Labour and Diligence of many able and faithful Miniſters; ſo that this cannot appertain to any one Man.

CHAP. XI.

THIS Chapter repreſents to us the ſecond Appendage to the *ſixth Trumpet*, from the Beginning to *v.* 14. Yet we are not to underſtand this to fall out betwixt the Sounding of the ſixth and ſeventh Trumpets: But it being to end with the laſt Troubles of the Church, it carries back the Thread of the Prophecy to the Riſe of *Antichriſt*, which begun under the ſecond, third, and fourth Seals; and gives a ſhort Account of the Church under the thriving Condition of *Babylon*; together with the laſt Efforts of the *Man of Sin* againſt the Church, with the Succeſs and Diſappointment of their Hopes and Expectations. It was neceſſary there ſhould be ſuch a Retroſpect here, to ſhew how beautifully the ſeveral Steps of God's ſpecial Providence about this Church are linked together; and that we may have the more Satisfaction, in viewing theſe ſeveral Occurrences that help to bring about the great and deep Counſels of God; And finally, that the Church may have the more ſolid Hope and Comfort in believing.

Could we throughly underſtand this Paſſage, I have no doubt but it would prove a Key to the Chronology of the whole Prophecy: Nor does it appear altogether unlawful to conſider theſe Things the Spirit of God has laid down for our Direction, provided we do it with Modeſty and Submiſſion. I own, a great many Expoſitors have dealt in this Work, and but little to their own Credit, and as little for the Advantage of Chriſt's Kingdom; However their Deſign, in the Judgment of Charity, we are bound to believe was good: And that they failed in theſe great Depths of God, is no more than they themſelves laid their Account with; and which all their Readers muſt impute to that Frailty of our Underſtandings, that many a Time impoſes upon us, not only to miſtake, but even to be preſumptuous under a Miſtake, which I reckon the worſt Part of the Crime. The worſt Thing I like about theſe Periodiſts, is this, They ſubdivide the whole Period of the Church's Trouble, which we have very plain in this Prophecy, into ſeveral Under-diviſions and Fractions, without any Warrant from the Text; and ſo they allow ſo many Years for every Seal, and ſo many for every Trumpet and Vial; yet we have not the leaſt Ground from the Text for theſe raw and indigeſted Conjectures: And therefore I am of the Mind, all Curioſity ſhould be intirely laid aſide, to enquire no further than the Text gives Warrant, and to determine no otherwiſe

than by the Conſent of other Prophets, which, from the preceeding Chapter, we find lawful and allowable. Our Lord, after his Reſurrection, gave a ſufficient Caution againſt ſinful Curioſity, while he tartly checkt his inquiſitive Diſciples, *Acts* i. 7. *It is not for you to know the Times and the Seaſons, which the Father hath put in his own Power.* This has been too much verified, in the unfruitful Endeavours of a great many this Way.

In the mean Time, there appears a very beautiful Connection betwixt this and the former Chapter, in that the *Apoſtle*, and in him all faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel to the End of the World, had Inſtructions how to behave themſelves in the Diſcharge of their miniſterial Work. In this, they are furniſhed with an Inſtrument for carrying on the Building of God's ſpiritual Temple; as alſo to know the Extent of the ſame, which indeed ſeems to be the chief Deſign of it in this Place, for the Tool is fitted for both Purpoſes. In this we have two Parts, 1. The State of the Church under *Antichriſt*, how modeled and bounded, *v.* 1. 2. 2. A full and comprehenſive Hiſtory of God's two Witneſſes. Theſe two do give Light mutually to one another.

1 AND there was given unto me a Reed, like unto a Rod; and the Angel ſtood, ſaying, Riſe, and meaſure the Temple of God, and the Altar, and them that worſhip therein.

2 But the Court which is without the Temple, leave out, and meaſure it not: For it is given unto the Gentiles, and the holy City ſhall they tread under Foot Forty and two Months.

This repreſents to us the Model and Limits of *Chriſt's Church*, from the Riſe to the Fall of *Antichriſt*, at leaſt to the Declenſion of that Blaſphemous Power: Where we are to notice particularly theſe ſeveral Branches, 1. The Meaſure. 2. The Meaſurer. 3. That which was meaſured. 4. What was to be excluded from that Commenſuration. 5. The Grounds of this Excluſion, with the Amplification and Illuſtration thereof. All which will be found a notable Introduction to the ſeventh Trumpet.

I. The Meaſure, *There was given unto me a Reed, like a Rod.* Where we have to view, 1. The Deſignation of this Inſtrument. 2. Its Compariſon. 3. The Way how he came by it.

1. The Deſignation of this Inſtrument, *A Reed*, which diſtinguiſheth it from a Line, that we find alſo uſed in Building; but the Reed is not capable of being ſlackned or extended beyond its Nature, but is more fixed and ſtable. It is remarked by ſome, this is the Inſtrument uſed to meaſure out the Ground of an Houſe before the Foundations are laid, after which they uſe to ſtretch the Line. It is called a *Reed*, from its Nature, and not its Uſe; yet they uſe to make their meaſuring Rods of *Reeds*, or *Canes*, or *Bamboas*, all the three ſignifying one and the ſame Thing. They were moſt fit for ſuch Tools, becauſe of their Length, ſome of them being above 80 or 90 Foot long; and their Lightneſs, that made them more portable, eſpecially if the Joints were caſed in one another, to be drawn out at Pleaſure; and their Straightneſs made them fit for this Purpoſe: And ſo we find them uſed, *Ezek.* xl. 3. *Chap.* xlii. 16. *There was a Man with a meaſuring Reed.* Rev. xxi. 15, 16. *He that walked with me, had a golden Reed to meaſure the City with*, &c. In this Senſe it is plain we are to take it here. But it would be raſh, to determine the Length thereof to be *ten Foot*, or *ſix Cubits*, as ſome do, ſeeing we have no Warrant from the Text.

2. Its Compariſon, *Like unto a Rod.* To paſs all the Fancies the Learned have upon this Turn of Expreſſion, it ſeems very plain from all Places of Scripture where this Word is uſed, that ſtill a *ſhort* Inſtrument is meant thereby, whether it be for Correction, or Support as a Staff, or a Badge of Honour as a Sceptre or General's Batton; and it muſt be ſo, that it may be eaſily managed: But here it was none of theſe, but to meaſure withal. And far leſs could it be a writing Inſtrument; for ſome tell us, Pens were made of Reeds.

3. The Way how he came by it, *It was given me.* It was not then an Inſtrument of his own preparing, it was beſtowed on him, duly fitted and diſpoſed for Uſe. From whom he had it, is not ſaid: Some alledge, from the great Angel; but we hear nothing of ſuch a Tool in his Hand, as we read of a Book: So that it is preſumable he had it ſent him from him that ſat one the Throne, but it was not material to tell by whom; tho' to be ſure this may juſtly get the Deſignation we find given to *Moſes's Rod*, Exod. iv. 20. *The Rod of God*, becauſe ordained of God for many great Purpoſes.

The

The great Queſtion here is, What is meant by this *Rod*? Which, after what is ſaid, ſeems to be pretty eaſy, That by this *meaſuring Reed*, we can underſtand nothing elſe but the *Mind and Will of God* revealed in *Scripture*; for, what elſe can be of Uſe this Way? *Iſa.* viii. 20. *To the Law, and to the Teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to this Word, it is becauſe there is no Light in them.* And again it is promiſed, *Pſal.* cx. 2. *He ſhall ſend the Rod of thy Strength out of* Zion. The uſing of this Meaſure is much commended, and ſo it is ſaid of the *Bereans*, Acts xvii. 11. *They ſearched the Scriptures whether theſe Things were ſo.* And indeed the *Scripture* deſervedly has the Character of a meaſuring Rod, becauſe it is ſtedfaſt and uniform; and not like the Rule of *Lesbos*, that indifferently agreed to every Thing: *No Scripture is of private Interpretation.* Again, the Scripture is very manageable, and can be ſuited to the Condition of all, in a very equal and eaſy Manner; from the higheſt to the loweſt, every one may find his Gauge therein.

II. There is to be conſidered the Meaſurer, *The Angel ſtood, ſaying, Riſe and meaſure.* Where we have, 1. The Perſon. 2. The Commander. And, 3. His Work.

1. The Perſon, *Me, John*: Who is here, in this Viſion, to be lookt upon as perſonating all the faithful Goſpel-miniſtry after the Riſe of *Antichriſt*, and are to be imployed in the Temple-ſervice during his Continuance, even unto his Fall; this we proved in the preceeding Chapter: Nor can we underſtand him in any other Senſe here, than in that Place. We find the Temple meaſured in *Ezekiel*'s Time, *Ezek.* xl. &c. But there is a notable Difference betwixt the Meaſuring of the Temple here, and that in the Prophecies of *Ezekiel*: For, in the *Viſions* of that *old Prophet*, we find him only imployed to look on and obſerve, in order to report, but the Angel meaſured all; Here the Apoſtle *John* has the Work committed to him, and the *Mighty Angel* only obſerves. The Ground of this Difference ſeems plainly to be this, The Prophet *Ezekiel* was only to foretell the Propagation of *Chriſt's Kingdom* under the Goſpel-diſpenſation, but neither he, nor any of the Old Teſtament Prophets, was to have any Hand in it; Whereas, in the Period of Time this Viſion reſpects, if not the Apoſtle *John*, at leaſt theſe repreſented by him, are actually imployed in *meaſuring* and *building* the ſpiritual Temple of God, under the Inſpection and Direction of Jeſus Chriſt: Which brings to the

2. The Commander or Orderer that ſet him at Work, and engaged him to Accuracy in it, by continually in a watchful Manner inſpecting him; *The Angel ſtood, ſaying.* It was the Word of the *Mighty Angel* which could only be his Warrant; nor might he ſafely move one Foot without his Direction, for all that he commands is obligatory, and nothing but his Orders can be ſo. Or elſe conſider, *He ſtands*, i. e. narrowly to obſerve. And further, he *ſtands*, ſpeedily to puniſh in caſe of Negligence or Diſobedience; thus the Apoſtle knew, a *Wo was denounced againſt him if he preached not the Goſpel.* Yea, and he *ſtands*, readily and fully to reward all that do faithfully obtemperate the Voice of his Orders.

3. The Apoſtle's Work, *Riſe and meaſure.* There are two Words in this Command, that clearly exhibite to us the ready and cheerful Obedience of this Miniſtry; that of *Riſing* being preparatory to the other. *Riſe* is a very common Incitement to any notable Work: So the Lord ſaid to *Joſhua*, Chap. i. 2. Moſes *my Servant is dead*: *Now therefore ariſe, go over this* Jordan. Which does not ſuppoſe the Perſon to have been ſleeping, but it is a Call to Preparation as the Work requires, and is a Diſſuaſive from Delay or Slackneſs. He is commanded to *meaſure*: This certainly alludes to a material Edifice, and yet it is certain there was no ſuch Structure in Being at that Time; For the Temple of *Solomon* was ruined many Hundreds of Years before this, and that built by *Zerubbabel* was alſo deſtroyed. Beſides, this Temple was in Heaven, as we find in the Cloſe of the Chapter; and ſo it was but emblematical, and to be ſure of the *Goſpel-church.* This he was to meaſure with the heavenly *Reed*: No humane *Canon* or Conſtitution can be uſed here, without the greateſt Danger and Sin; for, ſhould they be never ſo buſy, and come never ſo good Speed, if they take not the right Inſtruments, the Work will not anſwer the Pattern: As the Lord ſays to *Ezekiel*, Chap. xliii. 10. *Shew the Houſe to the Houſe of* Iſrael, *that they may be aſhamed of their Iniquities, and let them meaſure the Pattern.* So that Miniſters have much need to obſerve carefully theſe two Things, 1. That their *Met-loom* be of Divine Extract and Original. 2. That they be careful, in cloſly and diligently following the ſame.

III. That which was to be meaſured, *The Temple of God, the Altar, and them that worſhip therein.* It is plain it was the *Temple* was meaſured in *Ezekiel*'s View, *Ezek.* xl. 3. It is alſo the *Temple* that the Apoſtle *John* is commanded to meaſure: And it is as evident that there was no *material Temple* extant for any of them to apply *Reed* or *Rods* to. Nor will that Temple *Ezekiel* ſaw meaſured, anſwer to the

Temple was afterwards built by *Zerubbabel*; nor was he commanded to take his Pattern from the Prophecies of *Ezekiel*. From this it is, and with good Ground, Expoſitors have generally thought, in this Viſion of *Ezekiel* there is a Revelation of the Nature and Manner of the Goſpel-church exhibite to us: And if this ſhould hold, then it muſt much more follow in this Caſe, after all the *Levitical-ſervices* are extinct; becauſe long before there was no *viſible Temple*, that, being deſtroyed by *Titus*, was never to be rebuilt again. So that here, of Neceſſity, we are to underſtand it in a ſpiritual Senſe, and that particularly under the New Teſtament is meant by Temple, and under the Old, the whole Diſpenſation of the Grace of God in Chriſt: So that the New Teſtament Church was typified by the Temple and all its Courts; which to be ſure is meant of the *ſpiritual Church* of Chriſt, *i. e.* true Believers: For the typical Senſe of *Temple* under the *Old Teſtament*, is the ſame with the *Myſtical Members* of Chriſt under the *New*; And conſequently, the Materials of the new Temple are not Stones, but Perſons. To this Purpoſe we have many Texts, 2 *Cor.* vi. 16. *Ye are the Temple of the Living God; as God hath ſaid, I will dwell in them, and walk in them.* And again, 1 *Pet.* ii. 5. *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God?* And again, 1 *Cor.* iii. 16. *Ye alſo as lively Stones, are built up a ſpiritual Houſe.* However, this in general ſeems not ſufficient to unriddle the Viſion, in regard we have four Members of Diviſion, three to be meaſured in this Verſe, and the fourth to be left unmeaſured in the next; and therefore it will be neceſſary to view them particularly. But we follow the firſt Method, and here only conſider what the Apoſtle was appointed to meaſure, which we find to be in Number three; 1. The Temple. 2. The Altar. 3. Them that worſhip therein.

1. *The Temple of God*; which muſt be taken in Oppoſition to all its *Courts*, and to allude to the moſt ſpecial Part of the *Temple*, which had two Apartments, *viz.* *The Holy*, and *Holy of Holies*. This comes, in the moſt proper Senſe, under the Deſignation of the *Houſe of God*, becauſe therein the ſpecial Preſence of God did appear: And it was not only fenced with Walls and Gates, but alſo covered with a Roof and Ceiling. This, in a Goſpel-ſenſe, is to be underſtood of the *Church of Chriſt*; whereof we get three Characters, by the Apoſtle *Paul*, in one Text, 2 *Tim.* iii. 15. *The Houſe of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the Pillar and Ground of Truth.* And yet as plainly, *Eph.* ii. 21, 22. *Jeſus Chriſt, in whom all the Building, fitly framed together, groweth up into an holy Temple unto the Lord, in whom you alſo are builded together*, &c. Well does this ſpiritual Houſe deſerve the Deſignation of a *Temple*, becauſe, 1. God, by his Grace, dwells therein, and manifeſts himſelf therefrom to all Believers. 2. The ſeveral Parts of this Structure is by heavenly Art, and compacted together. 3. Its great Beauty and Comelineſs, the precious and gracious Communications of the *Spirit of God*. 4. Its Eminency and *Excellency*, above the World and the Things thereof. 5. The ſpecial *Guard* God keeps over it at all Times.

2. The *Altar*. There were two *Altars*, one of *Incenſe*, within the Temple; which we cannot underſtand here, becauſe that is comprehended under the firſt Branch, the *Temple*: For to be ſure, ſeeing we have nothing mentioned within the Temple, it muſt comprehend all under its Roof. There was another *Altar* of *Burnt-offering*, which ſtood without the Temple, but near to it, and had its particular Fence by a Wall: This we find called the *Inner-court*, Ezek. viii. 16. It was otherwiſe called the *Court of the Prieſts*, and therefore they are ſaid *to weep between the Altar and the Porch*, Joel ii. 17. for the Porch ſtood betwixt the *Altar* and the *Temple*: And likewiſe in this *Area* or Space, which was bounded immediately on one Side by the Temple, were the Apartments of the attending *Prieſts*. I own it is not ſo eaſy to aſſign a particular Meaning to this Partition, diſtinct from the Temple, ſeeing by the Voice of Scripture it is made ſo comprehenſive: For to underſtand Chriſt by the *Altar*, will but the more perplex us, ſeeing he is no leſs the *Truth* of the *Temple* than of the *Altar*; and here the Queſtion is not about *Chriſt*, but *Chriſtians*. Some tell us, We are to huddle up altogether: But then, what ſhall we do with the particular Enumeration in the Text? For my Share, I think it were better to own we cannot rid Marches here, than take ſuch a blunt Way of ſolving Difficulties. I ſhall offer a Thought, nor ſhall I be at Pains to vindicate it much, As by the Temple we are to underſtand (as before proven) the whole *Maſs* of *Believers*, which conſtitute the *Temple* or *Myſtical Body* of Chriſt; So by *Altar*, which was the Place of their ordinary and ſolemn Worſhip (for of old *Altar* and *Worſhip* were reciprocal Terms) we are to underſtand the Devotion was for ordinary paid to God: And ſo the Senſe of this Part is, You are to meaſure the Worſhip they perform, and take ſpecial Notice there be no *Wild-fire* offered by them. This Notion is brought immediately from the Signification of *Altar*; and if it ſhould

fail

fail to be true, there is more, I am ſure, to be ſaid by Way of Apology for this, than for any Thing I have yet ſeen advanced upon the Head.

3. *The Worſhippers therein*, or thereat. Here I find Expoſitors again at a Loſs how to clear Matters: Some flee to a *Metonomy* of the Continent for the Contents, and tell us, By the Worſhippers we are to underſtand the Place where they ſtood, and were allowed to come in Time of the Oblation: But, as far as I can find, the ordinary Worſhippers were allowed to come into the Court where the Altar ſtood; and ſo this will not hold. It is true there was an Outer-court, of which we read in the next Verſe, which was for the whole Congregation; but all that had Offerings were allowed a much nearer Acceſs. That which moves them to this, is the meaſuring Tool, which they alledge was unfit for *Numbring*, the proper Word for Perſons. I am loth to quit the Text, and think there cannot be a Meaſuring by Reeds or Rods, but there muſt alſo be a Numbring, at leaſt how many Lengths of the Rod there are. But ſome tell us, with what Authority I know not, That this Word rendered to meaſure, ſignifies alſo to number. I know in ſome Caſes it does, eſpecially with Reſpect to Verſes; but that it is otherwiſe applied to Numbers, I have not found: However it be, the Text ſeems to point at ſomething in this, diſtinct from the former two. Now the Difficulty will be, what to make of them; ſeeing we have them meaſured as Believers and Worſhippers, what is the third Capacity? I ſhall not promiſe to hit it; yet I may venture to affirm, I ſhall not be far from Truth. I take then the Meaſuring of the Worſhippers, to be a Gauging them as to their ſeveral Characters in the World: And indeed in this they are more to be meaſured than to be numbred, how they behave themſelves in their ſeveral Stations in the World, as *Magiſtrate*, *Miniſter*, *Husband*, *Wife*, &c. for there is a Sett of Duties belonging to each of them reſpectively, by and attour the general Duties of *Chriſtianity*: Yea, and the Profeſſion of this, without the Practice of theſe, will ſtand them in no Stead. God looks not only to the Number, but to the Stature of all ſuch as liſt themſelves in *Chriſt's Army*, and will have them good in all Capacities. And indeed this laſt is the Trial and Touchſtone of all the reſt; for it is not poſſible that a Man or Woman can be Stones of that ſpiritual Edifice, or that their Worſhip be acceptable, while they neglect theſe relative Duties.

IV. What was to be excluded from this Commenſuration, *But the Court which is without the Temple, leave out, and meaſure it not*, v. 2. Where we have to notice, 1. What is excluded. 2. The Command of Excluſion.

1. That which is excluded from Meaſuring, *The Court which is without the Temple.* This is not that built by *Herod*, and called *the Court of the* Gentiles; for it had no Divine Inſtitution, but was a mere Caprice of that ambitious King, to make a Room for himſelf and his Pagan Brethren, as near the Temple as he could: But this is with Alluſion to that Court, which, by Divine Appointment, was built without the Inner-Court, where the *Altar of Burnt-offerings* ſtood; and ſo it was furtheſt from the Temple: It was more capacious than the other, and therefore all the People did conveen in it. And is called *the Great Court*, 2 Chron. iv. 9. becauſe of its Largeneſs. And, in Oppoſition to the *Inner-Court*, it is called *the Outer-Court*, Ezek. x. 5. Few had Acceſs to the Inner-Court but when Sacrifice was to be offered for them, and fewer yet to the Temple; but the whole Congregation had Acceſs to this great Court. This Viſion ſhews us the Church was to be but then all the Time pointed at therein, and that the far greater Part of Mankind were to be utter Strangers to God: This ſeems to be what is called in *Ezekiel's* Viſion, *Chap.* xlii. 20. *The profane Place*, and is ſaid to be *ſeparated from the Sanctuary*. For here the *Temple* and the *Altar-Court* are meaſured, and the reſt neglected, *i. e.* left to be a common or profane Place; ſo that this Outer-Court, and the profane Place, muſt be the ſame. Some contend, Becauſe this is here called the *Outer-Court* of the Temple, it muſt be thought to have ſomething of the *Temple-ſervice* performed therein. But here it is ſaid to be trampled on by the *Gentiles*; ſo that, whatever Appearance of Religion it may have, there is nothing of Reality therein, and therefore it is not acceptable to God.

2. The Command of Excluſion, *Leave out*, or, *Caſt it out*, and *meaſure it not*. This clears further what we are to underſtand by *Meaſuring*, even to *include* or *comprehend*, or *ſeparate* for God; for this is to be *neglected* or *rejected*, at leaſt for a Time, and be unhallowed. If it be objected, How can it in a proper Senſe be ſaid to be *caſt out*, which was never within? I anſwer, Tho' it was not within, but without the Inner-Court, yet it was an holy Place; and the Temple with both the Courts come often under the Name of *Temple*, becauſe theſe two Courts did belong to it.

V. There is the Ground of Excluſion, in the reſt of *v.* 2. *For it is given unto the* Gentiles, *and the holy City ſhall they tread under Foot*, &c. It is here conteſted by ſeverals, That this *Outer-Court* and the *Holy City* are one and the ſame Thing. The Ground

of this is, that of old, while the Tabernacle was among the People of *Iſrael*, they had but *one Court*; and ſo, that we have Mention of another, and of the holy City, to be ſure, think they, there are here but two Names for one Thing. But, it ſhould be conſidered, the Alluſion in this Prophecy, is to the *Temple*, and not to the *Tabernacle*; And I find Mr. *Mede* own the Temple had a Court more than the Tabernacle; which, in my humble Opinion, deſtroys all his former Thoughts upon this Head. And therefore, it will be a much more natural Signification of the Words, to take the *Outer-Court* as diſtinct from the *Holy City*, as to be ſure they were in *Solomon*'s Time. And ſo, here we have to conſider, 1. The Objects. 2. The Agents. 3. The Action. 4. The Continuance thereof.

1. The Objects here mentioned, two; *The Outer-Court*, of which we have ſpoken; and the *holy City*, about which there is ſome Debate: To be ſure, it is with Alluſion to *Jeruſalem*, frequently in Scripture called the *holy City*, Neh. xi. 1. Mat: xxvii. 53. yet there can be no literal Application of this, becauſe that *City* was in Aſhes long before this Viſion. Others underſtand *Rome* by this *holy City*; but nowhere in Scripture have we this Deſignation of it. As for what Names her Votaries beſtowed thereon, at one Time or other, I reckon them of ſmall Account; eſpecially that we are ſure, in Truth, it deſerved that Character for but a very ſhort While: Nor indeed will we find a City in the whole World, after *Jeruſalem*, to whom we can with Safety apply this Deſignation. And therefore, I think it were better, with ſome learned Men, to underſtand it of the *whole Polity* of the viſible Church, comprehending both Believers and Unbelievers: For, we are ſure, tho' God ſtill reſerved to himſelf a Seed and a Remnant in the worſt of Times, yet the Church loſt its Face and Appearance when Antichriſt roſe. The Denomination is here taken from the better Part; yet, ſtill to reconcile this with what we had before, tho' the Face and Appearance of the Church may be defaced, and ſo obſcured, that it ſhall not be known, yet God will ſtill have a Church on Earth, that will adhere ſtedfaſtly to the Rule of both Faith and Manners; and in ſhort, have all comprehended in the former three, which are eſſential to a Church, tho' they make not for the external Beauty and Order thereof, without ſomething ſuperadded thereto. And hence, I conclude, there may be a Church, tho' there be not a viſible Church.

2. The Agents, *It is given unto the* Gentiles. There is no Doubt but the Relative *It* reſpects the *Outer-Court*; yet we muſt allow this Relative to have a Proſpect to the *holy City*, elſe, we muſt think, after the *Gentiles* had got the *Outer-Court* at their Will, they quickly became Maſters of the *holy City*; which is to make this an independent Action, contrary to the Mind of the Text, for it is added, *The holy City ſhall they tread under Foot*; which, to be ſure, they could not do, if it had not been granted them, as we have ſeen above: And indeed, it it ſo plain from the Words, we need go no further; for it is ſaid, *It was given unto them*, which is as expreſs as any Thing can be. Now, who could beſtow this Grant, but he that gave Power to the *Jews* to crucify his *only* and *beloved Son*? Theſe to whom this Grant is made, are deſigned *Gentiles*, or, as it may be turned, *Heathens*. We know all the Nations of the World had theſe Characters, in Oppoſition to the *Jews*, who in their Time were only bleſſed with the true Knowledge of God, and indoctrinate how to worſhip him: Now, that Nation, as we have heard, being rejected, we are to put in their Place all true Chriſtians, and ſo *Gentiles* muſt be the Reverſe of them, and comprehend all the Unchriſtian, or rather *Antichriſtian* Part of the World. As for the Character of theſe, we had it at large in *Chap.* x. 20. And here, that it is ſaid, The *Gentiles* ſhall get this Outer-Court, the plain Meaning is, That the viſible Church ſhould be miſerably defaced by *Heatheniſm*, *Popery*, and *Mahometaniſm*: Mean while, God would have a pure Church to himſelf, modeled by his Word, and fenced by his Power, in Spite of all theſe his Enemies.

3. The Action, *They ſhall tread under Foot*, both the Outer-Court, and the holy City. It ſeems to be a very nimble Turn of ſome, who would bring all this to point at the *Converſion* of the *Gentiles*, becauſe we read of *Treading in the Courts of God* in Scripture; and indeed, the Word here will indifferently anſwer to *treading reverently*, or trampling after a *hoſtile Manner*. But, had we nothing elſe, the bare Reading of what follows, concerning the Witneſſes, will not allow any ſuch Thought; for, how could theſe *Witneſſes* ſuffer ſo much in a flouriſhing State of the Church? This then I take to point at their Hoſtilities, elſe, why ſhould the *Outer-Court* be rejected, and ſeparate from the reſt? Beſides, we have this Phraſe often *prophetically* taken for *Enmities*, Jer. xxviii. 3. *As the Drunkard ſhall be troden under Foot*, which is to be meant of Judgment; and ſo *Daniel* tells us in his Viſions, of a Beaſt, that in a very hoſtile Manner *devoured, brake in Pieces, and ſtamped the Reſidue with his Feet*,

Dan.

Dan. vii. 7. It is a much better Thought of him, who obſerves, They were not to trample upon the Temple, or the Altar, for God had walled them about; they were only permitted to trample or ſpurn at the *Outer-Court*, and the *holy City*, i. e. they have Power only over the *Externals* of God's People; But it never was, nor will be in their Power to extirpate God's Church.

4. The Continuance of theſe Hoſtilities, *Forty and two Months*. Here is Comfort to the Church under her Calamity; for, tho' the *Gentiles* were allowed to trample the *Outer-Court* and the *holy City* under Foot, yet they were not to do it always: It is but for a Time, and in God's Account a preciſe and limited Time. Herein all agree: And ſo the great Controverſy is not of God's Notion of it, for *to him all his Works are known from the Beginning*. If we take this literally, the Time is very ſhort, and extends only to *three Years and an Half*, which is but very ſhort in itſelf; but, conſidering that the greateſt Tranſactions in the World are to fall out in this Period, it appears a little hard to confine it ſo: All the Time of the Church's Trouble is to be of this Length, and all the Time of *Antichriſt's* Proſperity is confined thereto. It is the more noticeable, that a great many other Tranſactions are meaſured by the ſame Rule; for, not only the two Witneſſes are to continue ſo long, *v.* 3. where it is ſaid they ſhall propheſy 1260 Days, which make preciſely 42 Months, at 30 Days in every Month. It is the limited Time for the Woman's Continuance in the *Wilderneſs*, Chap. xii. 6. which, by a Turn of Expreſſion in the ſame Chapter, is called, *Times, Time, and Half a Time*, i. e. *Times*, two Years, *Time*, one Year, and *Half a Time*, Half a Year; ſo that ſtill they are equal. It is the Space of Time the *Beaſt* which *roſe out of the Sea* muſt continue in the World, *Chap.* xiii. 5. *And Power was given unto him to continue forty and two Months*. From all theſe laid together, I think it very plain, that all theſe Events will be carried on together; for, no doubt the Church's Adverſity, and Antichriſt's Proſperity, will run parallel to other: And, as they did begin, ſo they will end together. Theſe who have been the greateſt Friends to the *Pope*, have been obliged to own this cannot be taken literally, becauſe it is not conceivable how all theſe Events could be crowded into ſuch a narrow Space of Time, and therefore are of the Mind a figurative Senſe muſt be got for it.

We find, generally Expoſitors here allude to two Paſſages of *Daniel*, Chap. vii. 25. and xii. 7. which they incline to apply to *Antiochus Epiphanes*, where we read of *Time, Times*, and *Half a Time*. This hath gone very ſmoothly on; yet, I muſt ſay, it wanted Correction: For, if by two Years and an Half be meant the Whole of *Antiochus's* Reign, it is falſe; for he ſwayed the Sceptre for the Space of at leaſt eleven, if not twelve Years. But, ſay they, He only perſecute the *Jews* three Years and an Half, and to this is the Alluſion. I anſwer, 1. It is not determined yet, whether the main Intent of *Daniel's* Prophecy is about this *Antiochus*, who no doubt was a very bad Man: And, till it take Place, how can any preſume here to be poſitive? 2. If any ſuch Thing ſhould be in *Daniel's* Viſions, as ſome incline, why may not the Revelation have a further Stretch than to *Antiochus*, eſpecially that there ſeems to be a great Odds betwixt 1260 Days, and eleven or twelve Years? Yea, I find, the moſt oculate among them ſtagger at this, and own, there is but a bare Alluſion to theſe Prophecies of *Daniel*; and further, that it is not certain whether *Daniel* meant *Antiochus*, or not. And, ſome ſay, He did not at all hint at him: Tho' I find ſome ſo liberal, as think, no ſmall Part of that Prophet's Predictions concern that vile Son of the Earth. Others are more modeſt, and think he has a further Aim in the Prophecy, and to convey to us the Diſcovery of ſomething after the Aſcenſion of our Lord. I am not now conſidering *Daniel* further, than we may get Light from his Prophecies, to what we are now treating of; nor can we make any Thing of an Alluſion to determine the Nature of this Number, which is our great Strait: But, ſhould we allow that Monſter of Men, *Antiochus*, who flouriſhed near 200 Years before Chriſt, to be a Type of *Antichriſt*, yea, and his 42 Months to be a Type of *Antichriſt's* Duration, we will not be nearer our Purpoſe, unleſs we underſtand preciſely three Years and an Half, or convert the Years to Days, and make the ſame extend to 1260 Years, which is the great Thing in Debate; and, I am ready to believe, I have determined one Half of the Queſtion already, while I did advance ſuch Conjectures againſt a *literal* Senſe, which pleads, we muſt next proceed to a *figurative*, where we will find no leſs Difficulty in this Particular, to enquire if this Period is to be taken *definitely*, or *indefinitely*?

I ſhall now conſider the *indefinite* Senſe of this Period: Herein I find the Promoters of this Opinion go ſo great a Length, as make all the Numbers in the Scripture *indefinite*; tho' ſome of them are not ſo ſhameleſs, yet they all agree in this, that the whole Numbers in this Prophecy are ſo, and that always a certain Number is put for an uncer-

tain. Were this true, I ſhould be ready to go in with Dr. *South*'s Fancy, *That all are mad who meddle with this Prophecy*: For, if we take away the Certainty of the Numbers, upon which depends the Knowledge of a great Part of the Prophecy, how can any Man ſpeak Senſe on it? Nay, I wiſh theſe Kinds of Reaſonings infer not ſomething upon the *Veracity* and *Simplicity* of God, I will not mention. I own this to be a very tender Subject: However, I am ſure, it is inconſiſtent with God's Way of Revelation in other Parts of holy Writ. If we ſhould make all theſe Numbers here indefinite; and all, or Part of the reſt to be definite, I would fain know the Reaſon: I think it is no hard Task to tell, why, in ſome Caſes, definite Numbers are advanced for indefinite; as, 1. If a Number be paſſionately expreſſed, as when *Jacob* told *Laban*, *Theſe ten Times thou haſt changed my Wages*. All own this is to be underſtood of an *indefinite Number*: For, were we to conſider all the Turns of *Laban*'s Management with *Jacob*, from the Hiſtory, we ſhall not be able to bring them to that Count. 2. When there is Reaſoning upon a particular Subject, and God would leave a deep Conviction upon the Minds of theſe he ſpeaks to, then, we find, he makes the Number far below what we may imagine to be Truth: So, ſeveral Times we have the Lord pleading by *Amos*, Chap. i. 3, &c. *That for three or four Tranſgreſſions*; where, we are ſure, the Number of their Sins far ſurmounted the Number condeſcended on; but the Lord ſpeaks in this Strain, on Purpoſe to aggravate their Sins, and magnify his own Mercies, as all acknowledge. 3. When a great Number is lightly viewed, and deſigned by a definite Number: So our Lord's Hearers, are deſigned to be an *innumerable Multitude*, Luke xii. 1. but in the Original it ſignifies *an Hundred thouſand*, becauſe it was not poſſible for the Evangeliſt to know preciſely their Number by looking at them; nor is it needful we ſhould imagine a Revelation to advertiſe him thereof. And here I can challenge any to ſhew a definite Number to be taken indefinitely in Scripture, but on ſome of theſe Grounds, or ſome ſuch like, that will eaſily determine the Thing. As for the great Pleadings for *ſacred Numbers*, viz. *Three*, *Seven*, *Twelve*, &c. they can have no Room here; and beſides, were we narrowly to ſcan theſe, they could not abide the Teſt. Nor will the great Names beſtowed on them by the Learned ſupport them: I only ſhall inſtance in one of them, *viz.* that of *Seven*, which they make to be a moſt holy Number, and yet we find *Devils*, very unholy Creatures, numbred thereby: So Chriſt is ſaid, *Mark* xvi. 9. to have caſt *ſeven Devils out of* Mary Magdalene. I could reaſon the ſame Way of all the reſt; but this I am poſitive in, no Number has more of Sanctity in it, than it borrows from the Subject: But, beſides, who can ſay, that either the Number 42, or 1260, have any Thing of Sacredneſs in them? And therefore, we may ſafely reject all theſe Whims, as mere Sanctuaries of Ignorance, or Superſtition. Beſides, I would fain know, if God in his Word has conſecrated any Number, and made it holy, in Oppoſition to all other Numbers: I am confident no Warrant can be brought to authoriſe this; but we find the Spirit of God uſe all Numbers indifferently, as he has Occaſion: And ſo, I think I may conclude, there is no intrinſick Holineſs in any Number.

To clear this Matter a little further, I ſhall offer a few Inſtances from prophetical *Deciſions*, wherein a Number condeſcended on, muſt be underſtood *definitely*; and, if of Neceſſity we are to do ſo in theſe Places, why not here? When the Deluge was threatned, we find a Reſpite given of 120 Years, *Gen.* vi. 3. I know this is otherwiſe applied to the Life of Individuals; but, I think, with better Reaſon, it is to be underſtood of the Subſiſtence of the World after that Threatning, *Gen.* v. 32. for *Noah* was 500 Years old when this Warning reached him, and he was 950 Years when he died, yet lived but 300 Years after the Flood, *Gen.* ix. 28, 29. So that this Threatning was about 120 at leaſt before it. Again, it was propheſied by God to *Abraham*, Gen. xv. 13. *That his Seed was to be afflicted in* Egypt 400 *Years*; which exactly came to paſs, and all own this to be a *definite* Number. Again, the *Iſraelites*, for their Sins, were condemned to wander 40 Years in the Wilderneſs; and 70 Years were appointed as the Number of the Years of their Captivity at *Babylon*. *Daniel* makes 70 Weeks to the Coming of the Meſſias. All theſe ſeem to be moſt definite, and they are from Scripture: And therefore, in all Reaſon, I contend, the Numbers in this Portion of holy Scripture ſhould have the ſame Privilege; or a ſufficient Reaſon muſt be given for the contrary, which I have not yet met with.

But now, that theſe Months cannot be taken *literally* for the preciſe Space of three Years and a Half, nor yet *indefinitly* for an uncertain Time, How are we to underſtand them? The Throng of Proteſtant Writers underſtand the Days *prophetically* of Years; and ſo, by Proportion, every Month to be a Month of Years, that is 30 Years, a Year always for a Day, and ſo the 42 Months make up the Number of 1260 Years. This appears very agreeable to Scripture; ſo we read of *Sabbaths* or Weeks of Years, *Lev.* xxv. 8.

8. *Thou ſhalt number unto thee ſeven Sabbaths of Years, and the Space of the ſeven Sabbaths of Years ſhall be unto thee Forty and nine Years.* Again, the ſame Way does the Lord ſpeak to *Moſes* and *Aaron*, Numb. xiv. 34. *After the Number of the Days in which ye ſearched the Land, even forty Days (each Day for a Year) ſhall ye bear your Iniquities, even forty Years*: And ſo Days are taken for Years by Divine Appointment. The like Manner of Expreſſion has the Lord to the Prophet, *Ezek.* iv. 5. *I have laid upon thee the Years of their Iniquity, according to the Number of the Days, Three hundred and ninety Days.* And in the next Verſe, *I have appointed thee each Day for a Year.* Beſides theſe, and ſeveral others we paſs, there is a notable Paſſage in *Daniel*, where we read of Years underſtood of Days, *Dan.* ix. 24, &c. *The ſeventy Weeks to the Coming of the Meſſias*, is neceſſarily to be underſtood of Weeks of Years, which make up the Number 490 Years, the preciſe Interval or Space, *from the going forth of the Decree to build the Temple, to the Coming of Chriſt*; ſo that we ſee it very familiar with the *Spirit of God* to ſpeak this Way. Nor will it weaken the Thing, that in *Daniel* mention is made of Weeks, and not Months, as here; for to be ſure this Objection would not have broken the true Senſe of *Daniel*'s Account, if there had been no counting of Years by Weeks before: And the Reaſon why Months and not Weeks are mentioned here, is becauſe the *Years* could be caſt into as many *Thirties* as exhauſted the whole Number; whereas, if it had been caſt into *Sevens*, the laſt Week would have only ſix Days. And, had *Daniel*'s Weeks been caſt into Months, at thirty Days a Piece, the laſt Month would have had forty Days, or elſe ten Days muſt remain after the neat Month. And, from the Paſſages above-adduced, it ſeem'd good to the *Holy Ghoſt* to count by ſnug or tight Denominations, without Fractions, as muſt have happened in both theſe Caſes. As for other Opinions, in regard their Authors bring nothing but bold Aſſertions, or ſome far-fetcht ſcriptural Alluſions, without any Argument to ſupport them, we paſs.

But the greateſt Difficulty is yet behind, When did theſe 42 Months begin? The Difficulty is the greater, that in this Chapter it ſeems to be the Meaſure of the *Church's Sufferings*; and in the next Chapter, the Time when the *Woman was to ſtay in the Wilderneſs*: Theſe two will agree well enough, but then it is ſaid, *Chap.* xi. 14. *She was to be kept from the Face of the Serpent* that Time. Now, if by the *Serpent* is to be meant the *Dragon*, this would ſay, That his Power was to laſt ſo long; and then the Church's Afflictions, and his Reign, are to run parallel to other: This will make the Beginning of theſe Months very early, ſo that they are ended ſome Hundreds of Years ago. Yet this would be but an eaſy Pinch, if we did not find that, *Chap.* xiii. that Beaſt who was to ſucceed the Dragon, and to get both his Place and Power, is alſo to continue 1260 Days, ſo that this would require the doubling of the Months; and, begin them as we will, they cannot end till 2520 Years be elapſed. Beſides this, it will be further perplexed with this galling Difficulty, That the Witneſſes are not to propheſy only for 42 Months in Sackcloth, but for 84 Months, which is double the Time, and croſſes the Text of this Chapter, which we muſt not, upon any Account, allow.

What I take to be the Ground of this Miſtake is, Theſe learned Men have taken theſe three, *viz.* the Period of the *Prophets* propheſying in Sackcloth, the Reign of the *Dragon*, and the Reign and Power of the *Beaſt* that roſe out of the Sea, to be all Parallels. Had they made out this, I ſee not what could be ſaid: But, in my humble Opinion, it is neither Truth, nor needful we underſtand them in this Manner; which I hope to make evident in what is to follow. In the mean Time, it is a very eaſy Matter to diſtinguiſh betwixt the Miſery of the Church, and the Continuance of her Enemies; for to be ſure they may ſubſiſt after her Affliction is at an End. This ſeems to be plain in Reaſon, two Enemies may ſubſiſt, tho' they be not offering Injuries to one another, for a long Time: This I think needleſs to eſtabliſh, for it is what is conſiſtent with the Knowledge of the Meaneſt.

In order then to remove this Difficulty, let us ſuppoſe, till we afterwards prove it, that the ſtated Time of the *Church's Sufferings*, before the Death of the two Witneſſes, is to be 1260 Years; and that the firſt Enemy ſhe is to encounter with, will be the *Red Horſe and his Rider*, or the *Great red Dragon*; and that theſe two are to run parallel to one another: Let us alſo ſuppoſe, that ſome Hundreds of Years after, at leaſt ſix or ſeven, the *Beaſt* comes in Room of the *Dragon*, and is no leſs an Enemy to the Woman than the *Dragon*; May not the Spite of that Beaſt be ſpent in Conjunction and Contemporary with the Dragon, and ſo fulfil the Period of the Church's Wreſtlings, before the Period of Continuance allowed the Beaſt that roſe out of the Sea or the Earth, be at an End? And that Beaſt (or theſe Beaſts) ſubſiſt, and be *in potentia* after the Power of the Dragon is defeat, and after the two Witneſſes have put off their

Sackcloth. I cannot ſee any Thing to hinder this, and in the Sequel we may find what will juſtify it.

In ſhort, I give the plain Senſe I have of it in a few Words; The *Goſpel* is early ſent abroad under the *firſt Seal*; and immediately after *Heatheniſm* is let looſe againſt it, this was the *ſecond Seal*. Theſe two were much about a Time; and tho' it be a Truth that *Heatheniſm* was in the World before *Chriſtianity*, yet it ruled without Controul till the Goſpel came, and then it met with conſiderable Oppoſition. Now, how to ſtate the Period of this Engagement, ſeems to be the great Streſs here: Nor do I ſee any but two we can pitch upon; The firſt is the firſt Perſecution, which is generally owned to be under *Nero*, about 23 Years after Chriſt's Aſcenſion, and ſo it will come in Computation (if our common Epocha holds) with the 56th Year of Chriſt; or, if as ſome reckon it muſt be after this Viſion, it will fall in with the Year of Chriſt 125, or 126; the Odds is not great. Now, if we add 1260 to 56, then the Period will end in the Year 1316, where we might find Ground to alledge the Sackcloth of the Witneſſes was put off: Or, if we carry it further down, and add 126 to 1260, it will make it to land in the Year 1386, juſt about the Time of the Reformation. We need not ſtick cloſs to Years, in regard moſt of all our Computations are moſt uncertain; only one cannot be underſtood if there be not a Condeſcenſion: But if it ſhall afterwards appear that this meets within Half a Century, I think it will be nearer than any has yet ſpoke of this Matter, and not carried it off this Footing. But the ſecond Part of this Chapter will give Light to this in a great Meaſure.

We have next the prophetical Hiſtory of *God's two Witneſſes*, which muſt be acknowledged to be the beſt (tho' a ſhort) Piece of Church-hiſtory extant; and reaches from the firſt turbulent State of the Church, till the Sounding of the ſeventh Trumpet: And who could be ſo happy as hit it in all its Parts, would no doubt furniſh the World with a moſt beautiful View of the paſt State of the Church. Here we ſhall ſhortly conſider theſe few Particulars, 1. An Account of the Church in its Nature, Power, Exerciſe, and Continuance, *v.* 3. 2. An emblematical Repreſentation thereof, *v.* 4. 3. An Account of their Efficacy, *v.* 5, 6. 4. The Hiſtory of their Death, with the Circumſtances thereof, *v.* 7. 5. The Inſults of their Adverſaries againſt them, in this their low Condition, *v.* 8, 9, 10. 6. Their Reſurrection, and Conſequents thereof, *v.* 11, 12, 13. When we conſider God had his Church moſt in View all the while of this Revelation, it will be no Wonder that here we have an Account, both of her Trial and Triumph: And, beſides that, the Spirit of God inſiſts more upon this than any other Subject; which I reckon a Call to us, ſeriouſly to view the Contents of the ſeveral Parts of this Paſſage.

3 And I will give Power unto my two Witneſſes, and they ſhall propheſy a Thouſand two hundred and threeſcore Days clothed in Sackcloth.

Here we have have a ſhort, but ſuccinct, Account of the Church, both as to her *Character* and *Relation* to God, and her *Work* and *Relation* to the World; where we will find the moſt excellent Subject pitifully incumbred.

I. There is the Character of the Church, *My two Witneſſes*. Where we have to view, 1. Their Deſignation. 2. Their Number. 3. Their Relation to God.

1. The general Character, *Witneſſes*; *Martyrs*, as we will find them to be in the ſtricteſt Senſe before we have done. Nor do I ſee how we can better explain a *Witneſs*, than from the *Caſuiſts* and *Civilians*, who both tell us, They point at an Office to which they are lawfully called; and that, in the Diſcharge of this Office, *They declare ſtrict Truth, with a ſure and publick Confirmation*: So the Scripture tells us, *They eſtabliſh the Truth*. Here God, who never left the World without a *Witneſs of himſelf*, hath provided a ſufficient Repreſentation, even in a moſt gloomy State of the Church. The great Queſtion here is, Who are theſe Witneſſes? I ſhall paſs their frivolous Conceits, who, without any juſt Reaſon, would have *Moſes* and *Elias* to be the two Witneſſes mentioned here, (and others, yet of leſs Worth) and ſhall only notice theſe two, which, when laid together, will join in one, as I take them: The firſt is of theſe who make the two Witneſſes to be the *two Teſtaments*; and they are at no ſmall Pains to bring the Meaning from the Force of the Word διαθήκη. This I own to be a very good and ſober Thought; and our Lord ſeems to give Ground therefore, while he ſays, *John* v. 34. *I receive not Teſtimony from Men*: But adds, *v.* 39. *Search the Scriptures, and they are they which teſtify of me.* I own this might paſs; but that I find ſomething in the Text that neceſſarily includes a Perſonality, and without which

which we cannot connect the ſeveral Phraſes and Clauſes of the Context after-mentioned; yet, to be ſure, theſe muſt have their juſt Place and Room. The other Opinion is, of theſe who make the *People of God*, whether Miniſters or private Chriſtians, to be theſe Witneſſes, but ſtill in the Terms of the Scripture: And thus our Lord told his Diſciples, after his Reſurrection, *Luke* xxiv. 48. *Ye are my Witneſſes in theſe Things.* And we find them ſolemnly conſtitute to this Office, *Acts* i. 8. *Ye ſhall be Witneſſes unto me.* There is another Opinion every whit as harmleſs, who by theſe Witneſſes would underſtand both the *Jewiſh* and *Gentile* Church, both which make up one Church; and ſo 'tis juſt the former Thought in other Words. I am ready to believe all theſe may go together, and make up a full Senſe of the Words; and that none of them can be compleat without another: All which will be more evident afterwards.

2. Their Number, *Two.* I do not think we need ſtick very nicely to the Number, provided we underſtand a ſufficient Teſtimony, according to the Voice of God's Word, *Deut.* xix. 15. *Matth.* xviii. 16. *At the Mouth of two or three Witneſſes, ſhall every Truth be eſtabliſhed.* And that they are called *Two* only, and not *Three*, for *Three* is alſo a Scripture Number, may be becauſe God was reſolved, in this obſcure State of his Church, to have but a few, tho' a ſufficient Number, to witneſs for him; and to give a Hint, there ſhould be many more afterwards. As for the Diſtinction others are fond of, *viz.* The *Law* and the *Prophets*, the ſame ſeems to fall in with what is above-advanced. And ſo does that other, who make *believing with the Heart*, and *Confeſſion with the Mouth*; for theſe are neceſſary to conſtitute a Witneſs. Upon the whole, I think I may make theſe Witneſſes the Church.

3. Their Relation to God, *My Witneſſes.* There is much in this, but it belongs more to a practical Improver, than an Annotator. The Senſe of the Phraſe is, They are *Witneſſes* for *Me*, and *my Cauſe* and Intereſt, and whom I have choſen and called for this very End: It is alſo to diſtinguiſh them from the common Herd of Mankind. In this Notion we have both *Miniſters* and *private Chriſtians* deſcribed by the Apoſtle, *Acts* x. 40, 41. *Him hath God raiſed the third Day, and ſhewed him openly; not to all the People, but to Witneſſes choſen before of God.* So that in the Comprehenſion of this is very much, for it takes in *Election* and *effectual Calling*, together with the Conſequents of both.

II. The Church's Exerciſe, in the reſt of the Verſe: Where we have to notice, 1. Her Work. 2. Her Authority. 3. The Time. 4. Her Condition.

1. The Work of the *Witneſſes*, *To propheſy.* Some ſay, All their Buſineſs was to foretell future Events, and do Miracles: But we never find this to be the ſole Work of any Prophet; nay, nor the greateſt Part of their Work, which conſiſted in *inſtructing*, *reproving*, and *exhorting* the People, this was their daily Task: As to that of foretelling, they did it as it pleaſed God to reveal the ſame to them. Beſides, we made it plain on *Chap.* x. 11. that to propheſy, in Scripture, ſignifies to declare and proclaim the Mind and Will of God: In this Senſe we are alſo to take it here, as the Context will afterwards more fully clear.

2. Their Authority, *I will give Power unto them.* But Power is not in the firſt Language, tho' it is certainly underſtood, as a great deal more may alſo be; as that they got *Gifts*, *Courage*, *Zeal*, and *Fidelity*, for all theſe are neceſſary in a Miniſter or private Chriſtian: But to make a Struggle with reſpect to the Phraſe, I ſee no Neceſſity at all; for it is very good Senſe if we keep them out: Yea, the Words themſelves are more ſignificant without, than with any of theſe Words; for they will read, *I will give unto my two Witneſſes, and they ſhall propheſy*: Where it is plain, if any Word be underſtood, it is this, *to propheſy*; and ſo the Senſe is clearer than in any Tranſlation I meet with, *I will give unto my two Witneſſes to propheſy, and they ſhall propheſy.* This is alſo a Strain very ordinary in Scripture, *Ruth* i. 9. *The Lord grant you, that ye may find Reſt*, i. e. The Lord grant you Reſt, that, *&c.* They hold all then immediately of God: It is he that ſends them forth, that furniſheth them, that protecteth and directeth them, in proclaiming and profeſſing his Name.

3. The Space of Time, *A thouſand two hundred and ſixty Days*; which, at the reckoning of 30 Days to a Month, makes exactly 42, the Time the *Gentiles* were to *trample* the *Outer-court*; and ſo it appears plainly to be the ſame individual Decurſe of Time meant in both: And the Senſe is, Theſe Chriſtians are to be imployed in this Work, all the Time the *Gentiles* trample the Outer-court and holy City under Foot. Nor are we to think it the ſame individual Perſons are to continue all this While; it is ſufficient if there be a *Succeſſion* of Witneſſes, giving Teſtimony the ſame Way, to the ſame Things.

4. The Condition of theſe Witneſſes, *Clothed in Sackcloth*, or encompaſed with Sackcloth. Some think it to be meant of the *diſtinguiſhing Garb* of Miniſters, as we

ſee Prophets did uſually wear *hairy Garments*, 2 Kings i. 8. yet we find none ſo clothed, but ſuch as had an extraordinary Call and Miſſion to the Office of Propheſying, as was *Elijah* the *Tiſbite*, and *John Baptiſt*: Beſides theſe, I remember not to find any others ſo clothed, except falſe Prophets, *who wore rough a Garment to deceive*, Zech. xiii. 4. Others again make this Sackcloth an Emblem of Repentance, as we ſee in the Caſe of *Ahab*, the *Ninivites*, and even of others; and that now they mourned under the calamitous Condition of the Church-deſolating Abominations, prevailing againſt the Truth, Faith, and Worſhip. The *Popiſh Monks* take Ground from this to plead the Excellency of their itinerant Lives, and affect coarſe Garments as a Badge of ſingular Piety; and the *Mahometan Derinſhes* take this again from them: Whereas, 'tis owned by their own People, That theſe are a Parcel of the moſt graceleſs Perſons alive, tho' both be encouraged by their ſeveral Maſters. Beſides, it ſeems plain from the Text, this Garb is not worn by theſe Witneſſes, of Choice, but purely of Neceſſity: As we find in the Caſe of *Joſhua* the High Prieſt, who, for mere Want, was wrapt up in coarſe or filthy Raiment; and therefore the Angel gave Orders, *Zech.* iii. 4. *Take away the filthy Raiment from him, and I will clothe thee with Change of Garments.* And therefore I rather chooſe to join theſe, who underſtand this of the mean, contemptible, and deſpiſed State of the Church; tho' we are not to doubt but the Saints, all this Time, would have very ſad Hearts, and gloomy Thoughts ariſing from their preſent Condition, and the Sins the Church had been guilty of, in the Day of her Proſperity, which had procured all this to her: However, I think their adhering to the Words of this Teſtimony, notwithſtanding all theſe Diſcouragements, ſpeaks forth very much their Zeal and Courage, that, in ſpite of all theſe Hardſhips, they could perſiſt in their Work from *Generation to Generation.*

We may then, with little Work, reject the Conceits of theſe, who are inclinable to underſtand ſome two Perſons or other, by theſe Witneſſes: Some *Adam* and *Noah*; ſome *Moſes* and *Aaron*; others *Elias* and *Eliſha*, &c. For there is no Occaſion to bring Witneſſes out of Heaven, ſeeing God can raiſe ſo many up to himſelf on Earth.

4 Theſe are the two Olive-trees, and the two Candleſticks, ſtanding before the God of the Earth.

This is an emblematical Deſcription of theſe *Witneſſes*, and will lead us in to the further Underſtanding of their Nature, and the Regard God carries towards them, and alſo their Influence upon the World, who, if it had not been their own Fault, might have had great Benefit and Advantage by them. Theſe Emblems we ſee are from the *Old Teſtament*, where I will, 1. View the Emblems ſeparately. 2. Conſider what is ſaid of them.

1. The Emblems are two, *viz. Two Olive-trees*, and *two Candleſticks*; where, 'tis plain, the Speech is of the Witneſſes, tho' the Word be not repeated, becauſe the *Relative* is of the ſame *Gender* with *Witneſſes*; and the Enunciation concerning them is, *Theſe*, viz. the *Witneſſes*, are the *two Olive-trees*, and the *two Candleſticks*. Here we have to conſider the Manner of the Expreſſion, for the Subject is one, *viz.* the *Witneſſes*; but the *Predicat* is complex, *Olives*, and *Candleſticks*: And therefore, we muſt not think of the *Witneſſes* as the *Olive-trees*, without, or ſeparate from the *Candleſticks*, nor the *Candleſticks* as ſeparate from the *Olives*; for this *Predication* ſeems to be moſt ſimple. I doubt not, but that here there is an Alluſion to that Paſſage of the Prophet, *Zech.* iv. 2. *What ſeeſt thou? And I ſaid, I have looked, and behold, a Candleſtick all of Gold, with a Bowl upon the Top of it, and his ſeven Lamps*, &c. *v.* 3. *And two Olive-trees by it, one on the right, and the other upon the left,* —— *v.* 14. *Then ſaid he unto me, Theſe are the two anointed Ones, that ſtand by the Lord of the whole Earth.* None can read theſe Texts, and collate them, and not ſee a very great Affinity betwixt them; yet, if we conſider them ſeriouſly, I ſee not how we can bring the Senſe of our Text, from that of the Prophet; for, in *Zechariah*, the Explication and Application of the Emblems is not ſo evident, as many think: Nor is it agreeed among Expoſitors, that theſe ſhould be the Emblem of *Zerubbabel* and *Joſhua*, tho' I find ſome of that Mind; yea, any that will look into the Text, will ſee, that neceſſarily ſomething is further meant than theſe two *great Men*, tho' they be mentioned in the Context. Beſides, tho' there be two Olive-trees in *Zechariah*, yet there is but one Candleſtick; ſo that, whatever Light that obſcure Paſſage of the Prophet may have from this Text, I ſee little Benefit we can expect from the other, unleſs we will have this to be the laſt Accompliſhment of that; yea, this Text ſeems much more evident than the other. I now proceed to conſider theſe Emblems apart.

(1.) *Theſe*

(1.) *Theſe*, i. e. the two Witneſſes, *are the two Olive-trees*; which ſeems to ſay they are more than *like*, but they *ſignify* them, or are the Truth of theſe Types; which is a very great Commendation of theſe Witneſſes, and that both in themſelves, and with reſpect to others. Nor is this the only Place where the Church of God is call'd an *Olive-tree*, eſpecially when ſhe had Sap and Fruit, *Jer.* xi. 16. *The Lord called thy Name a Green Olive-tree, fair, and of goodly Fruit.* This was not the then Condition of the *Jewiſh* Church, but it is a minding her what ſometime ſhe was, tho' in the Prophet's Time ſhe had fallen from it; but, in our Text, is the Character of the Church, tho' in Sackcloth, all the Space of 1260 Years. And thus, I think, we may get the Senſe of the Deſignation, without rubbing indiſcreetly upon the Words of the Prophet, and will caſt up theſe Things in the Aſſertion, 1. The Olive has an everlaſting Spring in it, and never withers: So *David* ſpeaks of himſelf, *Pſal.* lii. 8. *I am like a green Olive-tree in the Houſe of God.* Which he explains, *I truſt in the Mercy of God for ever and ever.* Theſe Witneſſes had need to be ſo, when they were to ſubſiſt ſo long a Time, under the keeneſt Malice the World could caſt forth againſt them. 2. The Olive is noted for Beauty; thus the Lord ſpeaks of the promiſed Beauty of his Church, *Hoſ.* xiv. 6. *His Beauty ſhall be as the Olive-tree.* This Pleaſantneſs in the Eye flows from its perpetual Verdure and Flowers. 3. It is very fat and ſappy; in Alluſion to which, the Grace of Chriſt is compared to the *Fatneſs of the Olive*, Rom. xi. 17. This is communicate to the Church, and ſhe is therefore deſigned *Trees planted in the Houſe of God, and ſaid to be fat and flouriſhing*, Pſal. xcii. 14. The Oil of the Olive is beautifying and healing to all who uſe the ſame; ſo that not one particular Perſon conſtitutes this Olive, it is the Church of God conſiſting of all Believers thorow the World: Nor is it to be doubted, but the Lord had an Eye to his Goſpel-Church, at leaſt ultimately, when he told the Prophet, *Theſe are the anointed Ones that ſtand by God*, when all declare open War againſt him. Theſe have Sap in themſelves, but not from themſelves; for all their Well-Springs are in God, elſe they would quickly wither; but being watered at the Root by God's Grace, they are both beautiful and fruitful.

(2.) *Theſe two Witneſſes are the two Candleſticks.* Theſe are not dark and lightleſs Lamps, which could be an Emblem of nothing but Darkneſs and Ignorance; but lighted or inlightned Lamps: To this Purpoſe our Lord ſpeaks to, and of his Diſciples, *Mat.* v. 14. *Ye are the Light of the World.* After the ſame Manner the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the Preaching of the Goſpel, *Epheſ.* iii. 9. *To make all Men ſee what is the Fellowſhip of the Myſtery, which from the Beginning of the World hath been hid in God.* As for the Analogy between the *Candleſtick* and the *Church of God*, we had Occaſion to talk thereof on *Chap.* i. 20. where the *Candleſticks* are expreſly ſaid to be the *Churches*. That the Number *Two* is prefixed to both the *Olive-trees* and the *Candleſticks*, is to ſatisfy us they are meant of the *two Witneſſes*: Nor do I believe there is any further Myſtery, nor need we ſeek Reaſons why *Zechariah* had but *one Candleſtick* in his Viſion, and our Apoſtle be advertiſed of *two*; for here he had no Viſion, but only the mighty Angel ſpeaking to him. Theſe Witneſſes then are called *Candleſticks*, not only becauſe they *keep* the *Light*, but eſpecially becauſe they *communicate* the ſame; as our Lord ſays, *Luke* xi. 33. *No Man, when he has lighted a Candle, puts it in a ſecret Place, neither under a Buſhel, but on a Candleſtick, that they which come in may ſee the Light.* Without this Light the whole World would be invelopt in the thickeſt Darkneſs.

From what is ſaid, it ſeems plain we are not to take the *Olive-trees* ſeparate from the *Candleſticks*, nor the *Candleſticks* without theſe, for both of them are conſtituent Parts of the ſame Emblem. The Oil of the Olives, however pure in itſelf, would give no Light for Uſe and Benefit, if not in a Candleſtick; The Candleſticks would yet be leſs ſerviceable, unleſs furniſhed with Oil. But there is ſomething notable in the Viſion of the Prophet *Zechariah*, which, I think, at once carries theſe Emblems, at leaſt principally, off from *Zerubbabel* and *Joſhua*, and brings it to the *Goſpel-church*, and may be of ſpecial Uſe here: After the Prophet had conſidered the Viſion, he propoſes this Queſtion about it, as it did appear to him, *Zech.* iv. 12. *What be theſe two Olive-branches, which, through the golden Pipes, empty the golden Oil out of themſelves?* This *Golden Oil* is a plain Emblem of the *Grace of God*, communicate by the *Spirit* through Jeſus Chriſt unto the *Church*; and ſhews us all the Light of the Church is communicate to her, elſe ſhe would have none.

2. We are to conſider what is ſaid of this Emblem, *Standing before the God of the Earth.* This is manifeſtly fetched from *Zechariah*'s Viſion, *Zech.* iv. 14. It is a trivial Queſtion, Whether this Expreſſion is to be meant of the *Olive-trees*, or *Candleſticks*, or if it is meant of the *Witneſſes*? for no Figure has any Value further than its Truth

and Signification is comprehended therein; for, as ſoon as a *Type* or a *Rite* turns *inſignificant*, it becomes not only *uſeleſs*, but *hurtful*. Here I ſhall conſider, 1. Their Poſture. 2. The Place. 3. The Character given God.

(1.) The Poſture of theſe Witneſſes ſo repreſented, They *ſtand*. Which repreſents to us, 1. Their Readineſs to ſerve God, for *Standing* is a *Poſture of Service*; here then they are waiting the Commands and Pleaſure of their great Maſter. 2. The Delight and Satisfaction they have in that Employ; theſe who are ſatisfied do not weary, and their Poſture is an Evidence of their Delight. 3. Their *Stedfaſtneſs*; they are not whirling about by the Blaſts of the World's Tentation, but perſiſt *ſtedfaſt and unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord*. 4. Their *Courage*: Fear does not make them run, nor Shame oblige them to hide their Heads in Holes; but after an undauntoned Manner they give their Teſtimony.

(2.) Their Place, *Before the Lord*. This, to be ſure, is with Alluſion to the Candleſticks in the *Tabernacle* and *Temple*, which were planted before the Mercy-ſeat, as we heard, *Chap.* i. Here it ſeems to point out to us, 1. Their Care to *approve themſelves to God*; ſo that they *ſet the Lord before them*. 2. God's *Regard to them*; he loves them, he looks at them. 3. God's *Care of them*; he keeps them near himſelf, he hides them in the Hollow of his Hand: *They that truſt in the Lord, they dwell in the ſecret Places of the moſt High, and abide under the Shadow of his Wings*. This is the Rock that is higher than they.

(3.) The Character the Angel here gives God, *The God of the Earth*: In *Zechariah* he is called *the God of the whole Earth*. Both Expreſſions are equal. It ſeems to be well choſen here, becauſe, 1. God *made the Earth*, and is therefore called *the Creator of the Ends of the Earth*. This is an expreſs owning of his Sovereignty, Providence, and Preſence; a ſhort, but comprehenſive Declaration of his Majeſty. 2. To *diſtinguiſh him from all the Idols* worſhipped in the Earth; for their God is every where preſent, whereas the *Gentiles* tied their gods to particular Provinces. 3. To ſhew that theſe *two Lights at laſt ſhould enlighten the whole World*; they were the Seed of his after-glorious Church, and by them the Borders of Chriſt's Kingdom were to be enlarged.

5 And if any Man will hurt them, Fire proceedeth out of their Mouth, and devoureth their Enemies: And if any will hurt them, he muſt in this Manner be killed.

6 Theſe have Power to ſhut Heaven that it rain not in the Days of their Prophecy, and have Power over Waters to turn them to Blood, and to ſmite the Earth with all Plagues as often as they will.

Here we have the Efficacy of theſe *Witneſſes*, delivered to us in a moſt prophetick Stile; and tho' I ſhall not ſay the Senſe of the Words can be fiſhed from the ſeveral Places alluded to, yet I doubt not but we may be helped a little to attain the ſpiritual Senſe from the literal Paſſages. All theſe are great Prodigies, and may ſurprize any that hear of them; and theſe who conſider them in the full Force of the Words, will be at a Loſs how to make Application thereof, unleſs they adduce ſome other prophetical Expreſſions to the ſame Purpoſe, but more obvious, in their Context; which we deſign: And ſhall take up this Efficacy in theſe two Generals, 1. A Power to kill or deſtroy their Enemies. 2. A Power of doing many and great Miracles. The one, *v.* 5. the other, *v.* 6.

I. They have a Power to deſtroy their Enemies, and by Fire. This no doubt has a plain Alluſion to two Paſſages of the Old Teſtament; The one of *Moſes*, againſt *Korah* and his Company, *Numb.* xvi. whom he threatned ſeverely, *v.* 29, 30. *They ſhould not die the common Death of Men, but the Earth ſhould open her Mouth, and ſwallow them up*. The Execution whereof follows, *v.* 35. *There came a Fire from the Lord, and conſumed the two hundred and fifty Men*. This was a moſt ſurpriſing Judgment. Nor is the other leſs remarkable by *Elias*, againſt two of *Ahab*'s Captains and their *Fifties*, 2 Kings i. 10, 12. where we find the Prophet *called for Fire from Heaven, and deſtroyed two Captains with their Fifties*. Nor will an Objection againſt this Alluſion be of Force, That theſe Fires came immediately from God out of Heaven, and not out of the Prophet's Mouths; which is certainly trivial: For, who ever heard of any that vomit mortal Fire? tho' there be odd Stories about *Sorcerers*, who have amuſed the ſtaring Crowd, with their Breathing Fire to Appearance: But Scripture knows nothing of ſuch Things. Beſides, it can be no Impropriety of Speech, to ſay, theſe *Fires*

above.

above-mentioned, *came from the Mouths of* Moſes *and* Elias, theſe having threatned them; and the Fire's coming upon their Word, without any other viſible Hand, may well be be ſaid to proceed out of their Mouth. Yet, I think, we ſhould not drive theſe prophetical Expreſſions even this Length, leſt we make theſe Witneſſes fall in with the Raſhneſs of the Diſciples, *Luke* ix. 54. *Who would have called for Fire from Heaven to deſtroy their Enemies*, which our Lord tartly rebukes them for. But, to paſs theſe Matters of Fact, which, I apprehend, will be of little Uſe to the underſtanding of this Text; we ſhall view a *prophetick* Expreſſion or two, which are more a-kin to this, *Jer.* xxiii. 29. *Is not my Word as a Fire? ſaith the Lord.* And yet cloſer, *I will make my Word in thy Mouth Fire, and this People Wood, and it ſhall devour them.* Now, who, in his Wits, would take theſe Paſſages in a literal Senſe? and as little can they do this: Beſides, ſhould we allow any ſuch Meaning here, it would be to make theſe Witneſſes do the Work of the Vials; and ſo there ſhould remain no Enemies to put to Death, as we ſee in a few Verſes following. But we would be a little more particular with the Parts of this Verſe, and therein notice, 1. The Object. 2. The Act of theſe Witneſſes. 3. The Certainty thereof.

1. The Object, *Any Man that will hurt them*, or *treat them unjuſtly*, as the Word ſignifies here: They are deſcribed not only from their actual Enmity, which reſpects theſe in Truſt and Power, who do really to the Church much Miſchief: But their Inclination, tho' they want Power, yet have enough of Will; ſo that miſchievous Devices and Inclinations, tho' never execute againſt God's *People*, are in the Sight of God downright Perſecution

2. The Act of theſe Witneſſes againſt theſe Enemies, *Fire proceedeth out of their Mouth, and devoureth their Enemies.* Which, as was ſeen, is to be underſtood *Spiritually*; and ſo to ſlay, is to foretel, and from the Word of God to denounce Deſtruction againſt them: For their Work was not to exterminate them, but upon their wicked Practices to threaten them, if they repented not, and amended; as the Lord ſays, *Hoſ.* vi. 5. *I have ſlain them by the Words of my Mouth.* This Deſtruction is ſaid to proceed out of their Mouth; tho' their Words are not killing in themſelves, yet they are diſquieting, as we ſee in the Caſe of *Ahab* with regard to *Micaiah*; *I hate this Fellow, for he never propheſieth Good, but Evil to me.* And beſides, their Words are killing eventually, by the Divine Concurrence, in accompliſhing upon his own and his People's Enemies all the Curſes he orders the Witneſſes to denounce; ſo that Threatnings are not idle Bugbears, they will certainly take Hold on all the Impenitent.

3. The Certainty of this, *If any Man will hurt them, he muſt in this Manner be killed.* I take this to be the *Sanction* or Certification of the former Part of the Prophecy: For the firſt Part of the Verſe fortels their *Power* and *Agency* againſt their Enemies; And this ſeems to be God's Homologation or *Ratification* thereof, aſſuring the World it ſhould be ſo. This alſo, I am ready to think, reſpects their warrantable Denunciations, in Preaching and otherwiſe, againſt the Enemies of Chriſt's Kingdom; and aſſures us Chriſt will take, ſoon or late, Care that their Words ſhall not fall to the Ground unaccompliſhed.

II. There is next a Power indulged thoſe Witneſſes of doing apparently many and great Miracles, *v.* 6. which ſeems to be a very extenſive Power, and equivalent to all we read in Scripture was ever granted to the moſt famous *Prophets*; which, ſhould we underſtand literally, would run us into a deal of inextricable Difficulties, and which no Man alive can anſwer for, ſeeing at leaſt a great Part, if not the Whole of their Time alloted them is over: And we never heard of any ſhewed themſelves to have ſuch an ample Patent; For we will find it literally to exceed what was made over to *Moſes*. But, to underſtand it, we would go through its Parts; where we have, 1. A Power to ſhut Heaven, that it rain not. 2. To turn the Waters to Blood. And, 3. A General, more extenſive than both.

1. They have Power *to ſhut Heaven*, &c. That here is a manifeſt Alluſion to that notable Paſſage of the Prophet *Elijah*, is not to be doubted, 1 *Kings* xvii. 1. *As the Lord God liveth, before whom I ſtand, there ſhall not be Rain, but according to my Word.* One might think this a very bold Aſſertion; but, when the Matter is weighed equally, that Difficulty will evaniſh, and theſe Words be more plain: And therefore, I would conſider here, 1. The Judgment. 2. Its Continuance. 3. The Power they have about it.

(1.) The Judgment, *To ſhut the Heaven that it rain not.* That, by the Shutting up of Heaven we are to underſtand a great Drought, is not to be doubted, from the two Parts of this Clauſe; for, all the Time Heaven was to be ſhut, there was to be no Rain. We have the ſame fortified from other Places of Scripture, *Gen.* vii. 11. *The*

Windows of Heaven were opened, and Rain was upon the Earth forty Days: For, if the Opening of the Heavens gave Rain, then the Shutting therof muſt reſtrain it. This we may let paſs in its literal Senſe, till we go forward to the other two Branches, and examine the joint Meaning of all.

(2.) The Continuance of this Judgment, *In the Days of their Prophecy*. Some, by this, would underſtand all the Days they were to *propheſy in Sackcloth*, viz. 42 Months. But this would make *Antichriſt* as miſerable *externally*, as we are ſure he is *ſpiritually*, if there ſhould be a perpetual Drought all the Time of his Reign, which this Prophecy aſſures us will be his preciſe Time: And ſo *Ahab*'s Kingdom and *Babylon*'s ſhould be of a Piece, againſt all Scripture; For, we know ſhe ſhall abound in all Things that Heart can wiſh, as is plain from *Chap.* xviii. 14. Others again take this in another Senſe, *viz.* That there ſhould be no Rain during the Time they ſhould foretel, according to the Words of *Elijah* before quoted; yet this would bring us under the Neceſſity of taking Prophecy in too limited a Senſe, and without Neceſſity. I think, a middle Thought, participating ſomething of both theſe, may be nearer the Truth; and ſo, I would take the Days of their Prophecy in the fulleſt Latitude, all the 42 Months, yet not ſuppoſe there ſhould be a burning Drought all that Time; but this, that from Time to Time their Influence ſhould reach to reſtrain Rain, now and then, during the Whole of their Time they have to propheſy in.

(3.) The Power theſe Witneſſes are to have in this great Buſineſs, *They have Power*, &c. To be ſure, God never gave ſuch an illimited Power to any Creature; for he makes it a diſcretive Mark betwixt himſelf and the Vanities of the Nations, *to cauſe Rain*: And *Solomon* ſuppoſes it to be ſolely in the Power of God, 1 *Kings* viii. 35. *When Heaven is ſhut up, and there is no Rain, becauſe they have ſinned againſt thee; If they pray towards this Place*, &c. Where there is no Recourſe to Prophets as if in their Power. Indeed, I ſee not how this can be fairly explained from any Thing elſe, but the Efficacy of the Prayers of theſe Witneſſes: And, in this Method of unriddling the Difficulty, we have the beſt Authority, *James* v. 17. Elias *was a Man ſubject to the like Paſſions as we are, and he prayed earneſtly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the Earth by the Space of three Years and ſix Months*: So that the plain Senſe of this is as in the former Verſe. We are aſſured God would take Care that their Denunciations againſt their Enemies ſhould be accompliſhed; for if he made not their Words the *Savour of Life unto Life*, they ſhould prove *the Savour of Death unto Death*: So here their Prayers ſhould ſtill have Acceſs to the Throne of his Grace, if not for the Enlargement of his Church, becauſe the ſet Time was not come, yet they ſhould be heard againſt their Enemies, and obtain Marks of God's Diſpleaſure upon them. This ſeems to be the moſt natural Senſe of the Words, and will help to the Meaning of the whole Clauſe.

After this, we have only to enquire into the Meaning of *Rain*: We have diſproved the *Popiſh* literal Senſe; and there is but another worth the noticing, which makes *Rain* ſignify *Doctrine*. That often in Scripture pure Doctrine comes under the Name of *Rain*, is not to be denied; and I am ready to go in with the Senſe of moſt of theſe Texts adduced to prove it: But that ever the Church, whether Miniſters or private Believers, ſhould be the Cauſe or Occaſion of this, I think, is more than any with a good Conſcience, after ſerious Conſideration, can allow; and eſpecially, ſhould the given Senſe of their Power hold: We cannot believe they would ſtorm Heaven by their Prayers for this Effect. It were a great deal more innocent to take up with the literal, than ſuch a figurative Senſe as this; for, we know it is the daily Prayer of all Saints, *That the Knowledge of God may fill the whole Earth, as the Waters cover the Sea*. Tho' I will not undertake to fix upon any one particular Thing repreſented by this, yet a General may be given agreeable to the Scope of the Place. Rain is a moſt common and neceſſary Bleſſing, and therefore it may here point at the now and then interrupting the Stream of *Babylon*'s greateſt Comforts, by the Prayers of the Saints their Influence with God. If this have a particular Senſe, I apprehend it is not yet known; but, whatever it be, this will comprehend it. The Opinion of a late Author ſeems yet more wide, That the Meaning of this is, The *Heathens* uſed to blame the *Chriſtians* for whatever Scarcity or Dearth they were afflicted with; for that was calumnious: But this has ſomething with a good Conſcience they might pray for upon their Enemies; and what more reaſonable, than to ſupplicate the outward State of theſe Men might be affected, that they might be brought to think upon their inward and eternal Condition?

2. They have Power to *turn the Waters into Blood*. This plainly alludes to that Plague mentioned by *Moſes*, Exod. vii. 19, &c. *When the Waters in* Egypt *were turned into Blood*. If we have hit the Meaning of the firſt, there will be no Difficulty in this

this; for Waters, whether in Rain, Pools, or Rivers, is ſtill Water: And now, if the Shutting of Heaven be the Reſtraining the neceſſary and common Comforts falling to their Share, for a Time, then the Turning their Waters into Blood, is to ſowre and imbitter to them all their preſent Comforts that they are in the Poſſeſſion of, that they reap as little Benefit from the Uſe of them, as they could have of Waters turned into Blood. This many a Time happened to *Babylon*, through the prevailing Power of their Prayers to God.

3. A comprehenſive General, *And to ſmite the Earth with all Plagues.* This no doubt alſo alludes to the other Plagues inflicted by the Miniſtry of *Moſes* and *Aaron* upon the *Egyptians*, and ſhews the great Power (the ſame Way as formerly by Prayer) of theſe Witneſſes: But with this Difference, their Power is more extenſive than that of *Moſes*, which reached only to the Land of *Egypt*, but this to the whole Earth. Again, *Moſes* could only inflict theſe Plagues once, but theſe can often, for it is added, *As oft as they will*; which, to be ſure, muſt be applied to *the ſhutting up the Heavens*, and *turning the Waters into Blood*, as well as their *all Plagues*. Which aſſures, God will never give a deaf Ear to their fervent Supplications: The Truth of all this will caſt up in the following Chapters. Now this laſt Clauſe fairly turns the *Popiſh* Senſe of this off the Field; for, if their Power was to obtain or do theſe Things as oft as they would, then there could not be one continued Dearth, or Drought, during the Reign of *Antichriſt*: But they are driven to this wretched Shift, to ſave (if poſſible) their *Pope's* Head.

From all we have heard of theſe Witneſſes, I think we may correct theſe, who mean nothing elſe but the Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament; tho' I own on the other Hand, there can be no Church without them, and therefore at the Beginning I did include them, but I would not have the Church excluded. My Reaſons why the Scriptures cannot be ſolely meant, are, 1. We have here a great many perſonal Acts, that the *Scriptures* are incapable of exerting by themſelves, ſuch as Propheſying, Denouncing of Wrath, and Praying for Plagues; this ſays they muſt be Men, but acting by the Direction of the Scriptures. 2. Be thoſe Witneſſes who they will, they are all God has on Earth to ſtand up for him. We may eaſily ſee what a harſh Conſequence this gives Ground to, that God will have no other to witneſs for him in Earth for the Space of 1260 Years; which I am ſure none dare affirm, for he never wanted a perſonal Teſtimony. 3. None ever ſaid *Zechariah's* Olive-trees ſignified the two Teſtaments, for but one of them were extant in his Time, but all underſtand them of a perſonal Teſtimony; tho' indeed here the Learned are as much divided: But their Union in this General, is all I want to ſupport my preſent Thought; which alſo will make the following Hiſtory of their Death the more intelligible, and prove the better a Key to introduce us to what follows in the Sequel of the Prophecy.

7 And when they ſhall have finiſhed their Teſtimony, the Beaſt that aſcendeth out of the bottomleſs Pit ſhall make War againſt them, and ſhall overcome them, and kill them.

We have ſeen the mean Life and great Exerciſe of theſe Witneſſes: We now view their tragical End; Where we have have to conſider, 1. The Agent. 2. The Action. 3. The Time.

I. We have the Agent of this tragical Work, *The Beaſt that aſcendeth out of the bottomleſs Pit.* Some ſay, This Beaſt is brought in here, as well known. No doubt he was ſo to the Church, when he waged War againſt her: But I ſee not how that can be ſaid with reſpect to the *Prophet*, for as yet he had not ſeen him, yea, and this is the firſt *Time* he had heard of him. No Mention is made of him in the *Seals*, tho' three dangerous Enemies roſe under them; yet it would be hard to affirm this Beaſt to be none of them, ſeeing we muſt believe the Church never had, nor will have any Enemy, not reducible to one of theſe *three*. Others think he is mentioned here by Anticipation, becauſe he is one of theſe three mentioned in the two following Chapters; but none of theſe are ſaid to *riſe out of the bottomleſs Pit*: And that will be the ſame with the former; for it will be found, theſe are nothing but the Illuſtration of the ſecond, third, and fourth Seals. Others again tell us, This is a fourth different from all theſe; but we read of no ſuch: And tho' ſome Copies read the Word *Fourth*, yet the moſt Learned have juſtly rejected that Reading, as diſagreeable to the Strain of the *Prophecy*, as well as to *more correct Copies*. That we may have ſome clearer View of this *Beaſt*, we ſhall conſider what is ſaid of him in the Text; where we have, 1. His Deſignation. 2. His Origin.

1. His Designation, *The Beast*, θηρίον, properly a *wild Beast*. We had not this Designation before in the former Part of this Prophecy: We read indeed of *four Beasts* about the Throne, which spoke by Turns at the Opening of the *first four Seals*; but they should have been turned *Living Creatures*, according to the proper Sense of the Word, which differs very much from what is here. There seems to be these Things comprehended in this Designation;

(1.) His Power and Greatness. In the Stile of the Prophets, *Beasts* are Emblems of *great Kings*, Dan. vii. 17. *The four Beasts are four Kings*. And we will find, that in this *Prophecy*, a *Beast* is taken for a Combination of Powers: It is reasonable to believe it will be no weak, or small, or inconsiderable Power, that shall be able to engage the *Church* with such Success. This *Beast* appears, from this Context, an aggregat Body of People, Kindreds, Tongues, and Nations, *v.* 9. and takes in its Comprehension, all the Church's Enemies, from *v.* 10. where he is designed *them that dwell on the Earth*. But this will be plainer from

(2.) The prefixed Particle τὸ, rendered *the* Beast by way of Eminency, as if there were not another Beast. Long before this War, all the Enemies of the Church were produced, and come to their Height; and no doubt would contribute their joint Endeavours, tho' by separate Measures, to destroy these Witnesses.

(3.) His Unreasonableness, for that is peculiar to all Beasts to want Reason; which the *Apostle* assures is true of all *Unbelievers*, and the Wicked, 2 *Thess.* iii. 2. *That we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked Men, for all Men have not Faith.* This is true of the Church's Enemies, both in Point of their Principles and Practice.

(4.) His Fierceness and Cruelty. All *wild Beasts* are Beasts of Prey, and these love to live on what is clean. I take this to be the same Beast we find afterwards *drunk with the Blood of the Saints*, Chap. xvii. 6. And to give a short Account of the Atchievments of the red, black, and pale Horses, which we have at more Length in the next two Chapters; And does beautifully usher in the seventh Trumpet, under which all the Church's Enemies will pay for it.

2. His Origin: Where is, 1. The Place, *The bottomless Pit*, i. e. Hell, as I proved on *Chap.* ix. 1, 2. Whence some conclude this to be the Devil: But we know, whatever Spight *Satan* has against the Church, he commonly vents it at second-hand, and therefore we may allow him to be the *Driver* of this *Beast*. But then it may be enquired how this Beast may be said to come from Hell? I answer, Because he has all from *Hell* that constitutes him *the Beast*; as the idolatrous Practices, and the bloody and persecuting Principles and Maxims. 2. His Motion, *He ascendeth*, or ascending, which signifies a continued Motion, as all *Participles* naturally import: This Motion of the Beast begun soon after the *white Horse* went out, and continued till this bloody Bickering, and afterwards even to this Day.

II. There is the Action by which he brought about the Death of the Witnesses, mentioned in three Steps; 1. *He made War.* 2. *He overcame.* 3. *He killed them.* So that he found this no easy Work.

1. *He shall make War against them.* This is not one or a few Actions, but a long and stated War. We may not think this Warfare was to begin till the 1260 Years were elapsed, for it begun long before; but all the Skirmishings they had, were not able to extirpate these Witnesses. Nor are we to think this will be a fair War; for the *Beast* acts for ordinary a most unmanly Part, by *Depredations*, *Massacres*, *Inquisitions*, &c. Many a Time also there were *formal Engagements*.

2. *Shall overcome them.* He, after long and unwearied Endeavours, wastes them, and, by perfideous Methods, brings them first to trust him, and then to fall by his strong Ones: So it was put out of their Power, either to annoy the *Beast*, or look to their own Safety. Tho' Truth, and these who stand by it, will always be victorious at the Length; yet it may ly bleeding for some Time, as happened in this Case.

3. *Shall kill them.* This must be lookt on as a *great Victory*: But to think there was not one left alive to witness for God, is what we neither may, nor can believe; for that was never in the Enemies Power. It is sufficient to verify this, if they got Power over a great many, and so to order the rest, as there should not be a publick Testimony given for the Truth, which is indeed a very great Height of the Influence of Enemies; for, had all that call on the Name of the Lord been cut off, they could not have recruited so soon, nor with such Advantage, as we may afterwards see in the Application. That would be to make *Antichrist* worse than *Ahab*, in whose Time we know, notwithstanding of his and *Jezabel*'s Zeal against the Truth, *God had reserved to himself* 7000, *that had not bowed the Knee to* Baal: And yet *Ahab*'s Power extended to a very small Part of the World. It is true, the Enemy may believe all the *true Worshippers* of God are destroyed, yea, and the Survivers may be of that Mind too, as was the Prophet *Elijah*;

and

and yet be under as great a Miſtake as he was; yet doubtleſs the Eclipſe of the true Religion was to be very great and ſenſible.

III. The Time of this Action, *When they ſhall have finiſhed their Prophecy.* As to the Words I can ſee no Difficulty; for, unleſs we (as a great many do) would wreſt the Words in all Languages, the plain Meaning is, At the End of the 1260 Days. Some tell, It muſt be before that Time; and the Reaſon is, The *Gentiles* ſhould otherwiſe trample the holy City under Foot more than that Time; and yet they are no leſs limited, than the Prophet's Time of Witneſſing. To this I reply, by redarguing, If it was ſooner, then the Witneſſes were not to propheſy that Space in Sackcloth. But I own this can be no good Anſwer, that ſets the two Parts of the Context at Variance; and there is as little Reaſon to make a Subſtraction on the one Side, as the other; and therefore I offer this Suppoſition, That they may propheſy, and no doubt in Sackcloth too, all the Time of the War, and the laſt Victory would ſoon be gained: If their Teſtimony ſhould end ſooner, the Enemy had gained their Deſign, for their Enmity was more againſt their Work than their Perſons; and ſo, as ſoon as an End was put to their Witneſſing, they had all they projected.

I only add, to ſhut up this Verſe, I am of Opinion, the Learned in all Nations generally are at a Loſs about the Senſe of this Part of the Prophecy, to which I own Hiſtory is our beſt Light, 1. By applying this to the State of Religion in a particular Nation, as *France, Germany, Britain,* &c. whereas this Prophecy is not deſigned at all to give the Hiſtory of any *particular Church,* but to deſcribe the State of the *Catholick Church*: Nor will any ſay, that the Fate of the Goſpel depends upon this or that particular Church's Proſperity or Adverſity. Nay, it is known, and needs no Proof, that in the moſt diſturbed Condition of the Univerſal Church, ſome particular Churches may enjoy profound Peace, at leaſt be but little vexed; ſo that we muſt caſt our Eyes abroad to find out the true Senſe of this; tho' even then, I will not ſay we ſhall come up with the *Chronology,* which I am ready to believe, God, of his Wiſdom and Goodneſs, induſtriouſly perplexed, that he might give no Handle to our preſuming Curioſity. Yet a great many tell us, Nothing is done to Purpoſe upon this Portion of Scripture, unleſs *preciſe Periods* and Times be condeſcended on: What is this elſe to ſay, but that we cannot underſtand a Portion of God's Word, unleſs we fooliſhly intrude into theſe Things which God has vail'd? It is as much as to ſay, A Man cannot be *wiſe,* except he be *wicked.* 2. Another great Miſtake I imagine Expoſitors run in, is, They ſpeak always of *Europe,* as if it was the *whole World*; or as if God had neither Friends nor Foes, which are not found in that ſmall Quarter of the World; and ſo they place the *whole Church* there, and ſpeak of her as if there were no *Chriſtians* to be found any where elſe; which, with all Submiſſion, I think too ſelfiſh. Yea, and they make the *Pope* to be the only *Antichriſt* (no doubt, becauſe he has always had his Place in *Europe*) but they neglect *Mahomet,* tho' his Influence in the World is no leſs, but more than that of the *Pope*; yet his capital Seat is alſo in *Europe,* and has been ſo for ſome Centuries: Neither is that Deluſion one Whit more favourable to *Chriſtianity* than *Popery.* Others again confine the whole of this Prophecy to *Rome* Pagan, which, one might be tempted to think, is merely to humour *Rome Antichriſtian.* Let us therefore give this Prophecy its *full Stretch,* and then by the *Church* will be underſtood all the *faithful Worſhippers of God* through the World; And by *Antichriſt* we ſhall underſtand whatever ſets itſelf in Oppoſition to the *Kingdom* of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

8 And their dead Bodies *ſhall ly* in the Street of the great City, which ſpiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where alſo our Lord was crucified.

9 And they of the People, and Kindreds, and Tongues, and Nations, ſhall ſee their dead Bodies three Days and an Half, and ſhall not ſuffer their dead Bodies to be put in Graves.

10 And they that dwell upon the Earth, ſhall rejoice over them, and make merry, and ſhall ſend Gifts one to another, becauſe theſe two Prophets tormented them that dwelt on the Earth.

This diſcovers to us the Inſults of the Enemy over the *ſlain Witneſſes*: For this *Beaſt* was not ſatisfied only to kill them, but after their Death, in a moſt barbarous Manner, erects their Triumphs upon the Miſery of *God's People*: Which we may notice in theſe few Steps, 1. In a vile and abject Manner, abandoning their Bodies.

2. In expoſing them to open View and Contempt. 3. In inhibiting them humane Burial. 4. In rejoicing over them in this Condition.

I. The Enemy did, in a moſt contemptible Manner, abandon them when dead, *v.* 8. There is no Verb here, but our Tranſlators have ſupplied it with one, *ſhall ly.* 'Tis debated whether this be the proper one or not; for a great many contend, the ſupplied Verb ſhould be, Their dead Bodies *ſhall be caſt out* into the Streets, *&c.* And ſome tranſlate the Verſe without any Verb, thus, *Their dead Bodies in the Street of the great City*; and think, if any Verb is to be underſtood, it muſt be borrowed either from *v.* 7. and would have it run, *Their dead Bodies ſhall be killed in the Street*: Or from the 9th, *Their dead Bodies ſhall be ſeen in the Street.* Some contend, Becauſe it is ſaid the Beaſt would not ſuffer them to be buried, therefore it is reaſonable to believe they were caſt out. Others tell us, There is as little Ground to believe they would carry their Corps from one Place to another. I think we may wave all Debates about this, and allow our Tranſlation to take Place, which diſcovers enough of the Contempt thrown upon theſe Witneſſes by their Enemies; and proceed to conſider the Words themſelves, where we have, 1. What of them was abandoned, their dead Bodies. 2. In general, where they thus lay neglected, the great City. 3. Particularly, what Place of this City, the Street.

1. What of them was thus abandoned, *Their dead Bodies*: By which we are to underſtand all that remained of them from the Fury and Rage of their Enemies. That we may come to ſome Notion of this, we would conſider the various Methods how that Beaſt has treated theſe *Witneſſes*, and will find they ſuffered a fourfold Death; 1. A *Violent Death*, in the moſt proper Senſe; either by the Force of their conquering Arms, or by the Hands of the Executioners of their unjuſt Sentences, in a very diverſified Way, we cannot now inſiſt on. 2. A *Civil Death*, condemned by their Acts, Edicts, Sentences of Proſcription, *&c.* which is called Death by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, who compares the *Jews*, in their baniſhed Condition, to *dry Bones*, *Ezek.* xxxvii. 1, &c. and the Reaſon of this Deſignation we have afterwards, *v.* 11. *Theſe Bones are the whole Houſe of* Iſrael: *Behold, they ſay, Our Bones are dried, and our Hope is loſt, we are cut off for our Parts.* 3. Others of them might be brought under a *ſpiritual Death*, and compelled to renounce the Truth; for to this Pinch many ſerious Chriſtians have been brought, a prevailing natural Fear working upon their timorous Minds, eſpecially when helpt forward by exquiſite Tortures, after the Manner of the *Beaſt*. We find the Apoſtle *Paul* confeſſing what he did in an unconverted State, *Acts* xxvi. 11. *I puniſhed them in oft every Synagogue, and cauſed them to blaſpheme.* This proves a moſt painful Trouble to them afterwards. 4. It may be alſo, many of them were *impriſoned* and *confined* at their Enemies Mercy, and had no Hope concerning themſelves. Now all theſe Sorts of Death would leave ſomething, and the beſt of it what they would and might juſtly reckon no better than a *dead Body*.

2. Where theſe Witneſſes were thus neglected in general, *The great City, which ſpiritually*, &c. By which ſome underſtand *Jeruſalem*. To this I oppone, *Jeruſalem* is never called *the great City* by God or his Prophets: We find indeed the Lord tells what others would ſay of her after his Wrath was poured out upon her, *Jer.* xxii. 8. *Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this great City?* But this is the Voice of Strangers. We find many Cities called *great*, but none ſo ordinarily as *Babylon*, which was in her Time the greateſt City in the World. It is alſo true, we find *Jeruſalem* called the great City in this Prophecy, Chap. xxi. 10. *That great City*, holy *Jeruſalem*; but then we are ſure it is not to be taken in a literal Senſe, but ſignifies the moſt exalted State of the *Church of Chriſt* upon Earth. But we are told again, Thoſe *Witneſſes* were to propheſy in *Jeruſalem*. I wiſh they had pointed the Text that proves this, for it is not here. If they ſay, It muſt be *Jeruſalem*, becauſe they did propheſy; I humbly think this Argument will not conclude; for we find *Jonas* was ſent to *Nineveh*. Beſides, literal *Jeruſalem* was in Aſhes long before this Time; and the Church, which was the Truth thereof, was under the Feet of the *Gentiles*: And therefore we can neither underſtand this *literally* nor *myſtically* of *Jeruſalem*. They ſeem to be neareſt the Truth, who underſtand this City of *Babylon*, which, in the Sequel of this Prophecy, is often called the *great City*. If it be ſaid, This City was alſo deſtroyed much longer before this Viſion than *Jeruſalem*; I grant it to be a great Truth: But here we are not to take it *literally*, but, as the Text ſays, *ſpiritually*. And here there is no leſs Struggle, for ſome make *Rome literal* to be *myſtical Babylon*: This is a Matter will require more Deliberation than now we can beſtow upon it; and becauſe it will fall more conveniently in our Way afterwards, I paſs it with this Remark, This will be found falſe. Others again by this City underſtand the whole Conſtitution of the *Roman Government*: Where they are alſo ſplit into Factions; ſome underſtanding *Rome Heathen*, others the

the *Papal Rome*. Tho' I think theſe laſt are neareſt the Truth, yet I think they have not hit the full Senſe; but we ſhould here underſtand by this great City, all that afterwards we can mean by *Babylon*; which will certainly comprehend *Mahometaniſm*, and *Paganiſm*, as well as *Popery*. Yet we have not done with this *great City*, for ſhe has ſeveral other Deſignations in the Text, which we conſider.

(1.) *Which ſpiritually is called* Sodom. This proves it is not ſo called in a proper Senſe, nor can it be ſo taken; for *Sodom* was burnt long before, and ſwallowed up in the Midſt of the dead Lake, or *Aſphalites*: But here we are to take it after the Manner as the Apoſtle underſtands a *ſpiritual Houſe*, 1 Pet. ii. 5. only here, the Sins of *Sodom* are to be noticed, which, in a few Words, were *Idleneſs*, *Pride*, and *Fulneſs of Bread*, together with a Piece of Impurity ought not to be named; all which Sins abound in *Myſtical Babylon* with a Witneſs.

(2.) It is called alſo *Egypt* in a ſpiritual Senſe, becauſe of her Sins of Oppreſſion, Ignorance and Idolatry; for *Egypt* was moſt infamous for all theſe: And no leſs is ſpiritual *Babylon*, as we ſhall ſee afterwards. I freely own, all theſe Things are found in *Rome*; but then, I would enquire, Are they to be found nowhere elſe? if they be, then, to be ſure, wherever it is, that Society deſerves as much the Name of *Egypt*, as *Rome* does; which is all I contend for.

(3.) *Where alſo our Lord was crucified*. This Expreſſion has moved many to take this as meant of *literal Jeruſalem*, becauſe our Lord was really crucified there. But ſtill, in my Opinion, we are to take the Words *ſpiritually*, and ſo there is no Need to dream of a *Crucifixion* at *Jeruſalem*: The Scripture helps us to another Meaning of the Expreſſion, which will agree to this Context, *Heb.* vi. 6. *They crucify to themſelves the Lord of Glory, and put him to open Shame*. This is expreſly aſſerted of all *Apoſtates*, or ſuch as againſt Light refuſe the Meſſage of the Goſpel; which we will find fully verified of *ſpiritual Babylon*. This is to be meant of a *ſpiritual Crucifixion*; for theſe, as much as in them lies, rob him of his *threefold Office*, obſcure the Truth of his Word, and wound him in his *myſtical Members*: All which make up the full Senſe of the Phraſe, and put us from under the Neceſſity of either brangling the Original, or fleeing to empty Criticiſms, which rather perplex than illuſtrate the Words.

3. The particular Place of this City, the *Street*, ἐπὶ τῆς πλατείας. This literally is generally yielded to ſignify one of two, either the great Conſular Street, which had no other Name but this πλατεία, rendred Street by Way of Eminence; or the *Forum*, or Place of Convention, which was a great and large Square, able to contain many Thouſands. In whichever of theſe we take it, the Import is, That it was in the moſt publick Place. No Doubt but this alſo is to be *ſpiritually* underſtood; but what Meaning to affix to it, will not be ſo eaſy; nor indeed would it be worth the While to produce the ſeveral Thoughts about this, and examine them; nor will it be of much Moment whether we take the Word *Street* in a *collective* Senſe, or in the *ſingular* Number: It is ſure it ſignifies ſomething that is open and publick. Some would have the Whole of this refer to the *Council of* Trent, which met 1546: But I would have theſe mind, they cut the Throat of their grand Hypotheſis by that; for, even allowing the *Pope* to ſpring up in the fifth Century, as they ſay, it will bring the Slaughter of theſe Witneſſes down to the ſeventeenth Century, which is long after that Council; and theſe who date the Riſe of the *Papal Power* later, are yet at a greater Loſs. But, as I ſaid, tho' the Pope be a Part, yet he is not the Whole of *Babylon*; and a more enlarged View muſt be had of this, not to reſpect *Europe* only, but *Aſia* and *Africa*, for in both theſe Parts of the World, Chriſt had all alongſt a Church, and that Church had Enemies. Nor will it do well to confine the Senſe of this intirely to *Councils* or *Edicts* from Authority, ſince I ſhewed that was but a fourth Part of the Death here pointed at: But I wave any particular Reflexion, till I have viewed the whole Context.

II. The dead Bodies of theſe Witneſſes were expoſed to the View of all Sorts of People, *v.* 9. Some take this as the Act of Friends, who would have the former to be an Act of Hoſtility. I own, I can ſee no Turn of Expreſſion in the Text capable to juſtify this; but I ſhall conſider the Words, where are, 1. The Perſons. 2. Their Act. 3. The Time of this Act.

1. The Perſons, *They of the People, and Kindreds, and Tongues, and Nations*. Some think, wherever we meet with this Deſignation, it is to be taken for the People of God, in Oppoſition to the Followers of *Antichriſt*, called *Them that dwell on the Earth*. I cannot find any Ground for this; but rather, on the contrary, they are commonly, tho' not always, oppoſed to the Redeemed, and particularly in a Text adduced by them to ſupport this Thought, *Rev.* v. 9. *Thou haſt redeemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation*. Where, it is very evident, the Redeemed are diſtinguiſhed from all theſe. The *Antitheſis* in the

Text neceſſarily requires it; for, being taken out amongſt all theſe Denominations, they got a new Name: But the Claſſes from which they were detached, do continue ſtill to be *People, Kindreds*, &c. Again, that there is a Turn of Expreſſion in the following Verſe, does not ſay that they are of different Diſpoſitions; but this deſcribes them from their Diverſity, of all *People, Kindreds*, &c. the other denotes their Unity, they were all earthly and carnal. *Laſtly*, If we have hit the Senſe of the *Witneſſes* above, it is not poſſible theſe here mentioned ſhould be the *People of God*, elſe they ſhould be both *ſlain*, and *Onlookers* of themſelves in that Condition; and, which is yet harder, it would ſay, tho' it was not in their Power to hinder the Beaſt to overcome them, and ſlay them, yet, after they were overcome and killed, they ſhould reſiſt the Burying of them.

2. Their Act, *They ſhall ſee their Deads Bodies*; i. e. ſay ſome, They ſhall look upon them with Pity and Commiſeration, as One looks upon the Diſtreſs of his Friend; and they endeavour to ground this upon the Uſe of the Word βλέπειν, but indeed it will not ſupport the ſame: Tho', I own, it is ſometimes ſo taken, yet not always, nay, nor ſo oft as to look with Pleaſure and Satisfaction, which ſeems alſo to be the proper Senſe of the Word βλέπω, *quaſi* βάλλω ὤπας to caſt the Eyes: But that which I think will decide the Matter, is an an Expreſſion of the Prophet, *Obad. v.* 12, 13. *Thou ſhouldſt not have looked on the Day of thy Brother, in the Day that he became a Stranger; neither ſhouldſt thou have rejoiced over the Children of* Judah, *&c. Thou ſhouldſt not have entred into the Gate of my People in the Day of their Calamity; yea, thou ſhouldſt not have looked on their Affliction*, &c. By theſe Expreſſions all the World mean a haughty and ſatisfied Look; and juſt ſo are we to take it here: Thoſe Spectators were well pleaſed with the Sight, and were loth to loſe it, and therefore they looked ſo long, as we find in the next Place,

3. The Time of this Act, *Three Days and an Half*. After what was ſaid on *v.* 2. there will be no Need to dwell on this; for certainly in both Places, *Day* is to be taken in the ſame Senſe: And therefore, if by 1260 Days we are to mean ſo many Years, of Courſe theſe three Days and an Half muſt be *three Years and an Half*. But, however it go, this is to be underſtood of a ſhort Space, in Compariſon of the former Period of 1260 Years. It ſeems alſo a very idle Queſtion, Whether this ſhort Period is to be deduced from the long one, or to be added thereto? for, ſeeing all *Chronology* is ſo uncertain, and eſpecially that of this Prophecy, it will neither mar nor mend the Matter, whichever of them be allowed. One Thing I am very ſure of, the *Popiſh* Scheme cannot hold, that theſe *three Days and an Half* are to be underſtood of *natural Days*; for they could not ſend their Embaſſies of Congratulation from one Corner of the World to another in that ſhort Time.

III. Thoſe Enemies of the *Witneſſes* would not allow them humane Burial; for it is ſaid, *They ſhall not ſuffer their dead Bodies to be put in Graves*: Or, as ſome incline to render it, They will not ſuffer their dead Bodies to be put in Monuments; *i. e.* they would have no Memorial of them. But this Senſe will not fadge with the expoſing of them unburied *three Days and an Half*; for to be ſure they had no Sort of Interrment all that Time. There are Scripture-Expreſſions whereto this ſeems to allude, *Pſal.* lxxix. 3. *Their Blood have they ſpilt round about* Jeruſalem, *and there is none to bury them. Solomon* alſo reckons this a great Miſery, *Eccleſ.* vi. 3. *His Soul be not filled with Good, and alſo that he have no Burial.* We find this alſo threatned as a great Judgment, *Jer.* vii. 33. *The Carcaſes of this People ſhall be Meat for the Fowls of Heaven, and the Beaſts of the Earth, and none ſhall fray them away.* So this *Beaſt* will treat theſe *Witneſſes* as if they were the greateſt Malefactors; that common Benefit allowed all Men, in the loweſt Ebb of their Miſery, is denied to *God's Witneſſes*: And we find that God makes a Proportion betwixt the Sin and Judgment of *Babylon*, and *did unto her as ſhe had done unto his People.* For, *Chap.* xix. 17. the Fowls of the Air are called to feed upon the great Men of *Babylon*; and therefore, in this Place, we are to underſtand the utmoſt Stretch of the Fury of *Babylon*, and her Partiſans. And, becauſe there were ſeveral Sorts of Deaths mentioned, we muſt make a Difference in the Burial; to be nice upon this Point, might be more uneaſy than edifying: Let us only in the general underſtand the higheſt Degree of Spite in the greateſt Ebb of Miſery, which, to be ſure, this Beaſt would diſpenſe to theſe Witneſſes; and then there is little more to be ſaid.

IV. There is their Enemies rejoicing over them in this miſerable and low Condition, *v.* 10. which we will find a cruel Mockery, or the utmoſt Bounds of Enmity, which proſecute them even when they were dead. In this we may notice theſe Things, 1. The Character of the Perſons. 2. The ſeveral Acts of their Jubilation. 3. The Ground thereof.

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1. The Perſons, whom we have here deſcribed, *They that dwell upon the Earth*: All own this to be the Deſignation of Chriſt's Enemies; but that the fourfold Character, *v.* 9. is not to be underſtood of the Church. I only offer one plain Text from this Prophecy, which I think moſt probative in the preſent Caſe, and of a ſpecial Influence on what is ſaid; we have it, *Chap.* xiii. 7. where Power is given to that Beaſt over *all Nations, and Kindreds, and Tongues*; which we have turned by this very Clauſe, *v.* 8. *All that dwell on the Earth.* If here it be alledged, they ſtill differ, becauſe they ſeem to be oppoſite Specifications. I anſwer, The *Specification* there is very plain, for it turns to theſe two Sides, all that are written in the Book of Life; where, it would appear, *that Nations, Kindreds, and Tongues*, and alſo them *that dwell on the Earth*, are none of theſe in the Lamb's Book of Life, which is all I wanted to prove in this Caſe. Beſides, there ſeems here to be a double Oppoſition to the Church; 1. Their Deſignation here is ſuch *as dwell on the Earth*: Whereas the Character of Chriſt's People are *Saints*, ἅγιοι, *above the Earth*, which we render *Saints*, becauſe they are heavenly in their Affections and Converſations; whereas the Subjects of *Babylon* are of the *Earth*, and are *earthly*, yea, devoted to the Earth, elſe they would never have received the *Mark of the Beaſt*, as we find afterwards: And ſo the Whole of their Ambition is after earthly Things, and no Wonder they be *Enemies to the Croſs of Chriſt*. 2. The Servants of God own themſelves to be *Strangers* and *Sojourners* on the Earth; but theſe here ſpoken of are the *Inhabiters of the Earth*, the World is their Portion, nor have they any other Home.

2. There are the ſeveral Acts of their Jubilation or Rejoicing: There ſeems to be no Difficulty in the Words, I only mention them as they ly in Order, 1. *They rejoiced over them*, or, as ſome paraphraſe it, *They comforted one another upon the News of the Prophets Death.* We know nothing is more entertaining among Friends, than to tell and hear News that make for the Intereſt of their Party, becauſe therefrom they might conceive Hope of a durable Peace and Satisfaction in Time coming. 2. *They ſhall make merry.* All own this points at that *Mirth* which ariſes from Feaſts and Banquets; *Take thine Eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry*; the Word ſignifies to fare ſumptuouſly, and ſo it is rendred, *Luke* xvi. 19. *There was a certain rich Man was clothed in Purple and Linen, and fared ſumptuouſly every Day.* It will take in with it all the other Diſcoveries of *prophane* and carnal Mirth, unworthy the mentioning in this Place. 3. *They ſhall ſend Gifts to one another*; this was an old Cuſtom, *Neh.* xi. 12. *The People went their Way to eat and to drink, and to ſend Portions, and to make great Mirth.* Yet ſome contend, we are here to notice further, theſe *Gifts* they ſent to one another, were the Spoils of the Witneſſes, as a ſure Pledge of their Victory. I own the Fancy is turgide, but I cannot ſay it is evident; but whatever they ſent, whether their own, or the Spoils of the Chriſtians, was a ſure Evidence of their Satisfaction and Security.

3. The Ground of their Rejoicing, *Becauſe theſe two Witneſſes had tormented them that dwelt on the Earth.* No doubt but there is a notable Eliſis here; for, Who can think *Babylon* would rejoice, becauſe ſhe and her Partiſans were tormented? this was never Cauſe of Joy to any: But this is eaſily ſupplied from what is above, and may be compriſed in theſe few Words, becauſe theſe Witneſſes *are dead, who had tormented*, &c. Beſides, it is plain, this *Torment* did not flow from the *Perſons*, but their *Teſtimony*; for that was moſt galling to them, as we ſee it was in the Caſe of *Stephen*, Acts vii. 54. *And when they heard theſe Things, they were cut to the Heart, and gnaſhed on him with their Teeth.* All Matter of Joy is on one of two Accounts, either becauſe we are poſſeſſed of a deſired Good, or freed from a formidable Evil, which had been moſt uneaſy to us: The latter takes Place here; for theſe *two Witneſſes had tormented* the Kingdom of *Antichriſt* while they were alive, and now being dead, they hop'd they ſhould meet with no further Trouble from them. This in ſome Meaſure clears the Slaughter, which was not ſo much a final Extermination, as a Deliverance from their uneaſy Teſtimony. And ſo it remains we enquire a little, How the Prophecy of theſe two Witneſſes could *torment* Babylon? for indeed the Man of Sin was more afraid of their *Tongue* than their *Hands*: And here, in a great Meaſure, I ſhall be obliged to the learned Mr. *Durham*, our Country-man, in theſe Particulars.

(1.) The Teſtimony of faithful Witneſſes for the Truth, is moſt galling to the Conſciences of theſe who are neither reſolved to confeſs nor forſake their Errors and falſe Ways: So it was with *Stephen*'s Hearers, they gnaſhed with their Teeth, as a Sign of their Diſſatisfaction with the Reprover, but not with the Sin they were reproved for.

(2.) The Witneſs of ſuch breaks many a ſound Nap that the Sinner would otherwiſe have, and is fond of: As *Ahab*, when he had committed his Sin, and was reaping the

Fruits thereof in great Peace, dreaming of no Trouble; yet, of a ſudden, in comes an ill-manner'd Prophet who was not called, and tells him with a Vengeance, 1 *Kings* xxi. 19. *Thou haſt killed and taken Poſſeſſion.* This was a moſt alarming Story to a King, lately before ſick of Covetouſneſs, yea, ſcarcely well recovered; and now he is taken with a terrible Fit of godleſs Remorſe, and diſcovers it in this graceleſs Expreſſion, *v.* 20. *Haſt thou found me, O mine Enemy?*

(3.) The Word of God provokes Corruption, which, it may be, would have lyen dormant for a Time: As wee ſee in the Caſe of *Hazael*, when the Prophet told him the Miſchief he would do, he anſwered, *Is thy Servant a dead Dog?* 2 Kings viii. 12. And yet he verified every Title of the Prophet's Words; a ſure Sign he was not cautious or godly.

(4.) The Teſtimony of God's Witneſſes ſtrik'd at the Reputation of theſe Enemies: And this they value above all Things. As ſoon as it is touched, immediately they fly to Arms. Say but the *Pope* is *Antichriſt*, Free-will is an Idol, Holineſs is not neceſſary to Happineſs, no Man can be converted without free Grace, no Pardon without Repentance and Reformation, that all who live ungodly, *&c.* ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; they'll ſay with Indignation, All that is Can't, Reflection, Ill-nature, *&c.* and they are ready to rend their Clothes.

(5.) The Teſtimony of *God's Witneſſes* ſtrikes exactly againſt the Conſtitution of *Babylon*, and ſhe is ready to tell them as *Achab* did *Elijah*, 1 Kings xviii. 17. *Ye are the Troublers of* Iſrael. And as the *Jews* of *Theſſalonica* ſaid of *Paul* and his Companions, *Acts* xvii. 6. *Theſe that have turned the World upſide down, are come hither.* In our Day, ſuch Expreſſions as theſe would paſs for Flaſhes of Wit, yet they are all groſs Prophanity. In this Senſe it is that the Goſpel may be ſaid to bring a Sword.

(6.) The Teſtimony of theſe Witneſſes did thwart the Intereſt of *Babylon*, which, with her, is the tender Part; and therefore it is no Wonder they cry out with the Silver-ſmiths of *Epheſus*, This will ruine our Trade, that brings us ſo much Wealth. What moved *Jeroboam* to promote the *Calves at* Dan *and* Bethel? but leſt the Children of *Iſrael*, going continually to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip, might in Time cleave to the Houſe of *David*, and abandon him.

11 And after three Days and an Half, the Spirit of Life from God entred into them: And they ſtood upon their Feet, and great Fear fell upon them which ſaw them.

12 And they heard a great Voice from Heaven, ſaying unto them, Come up hither. And they aſcended up to Heaven in a Cloud, and their Enemies beheld them.

13 And the ſame Hour was there a great Earthquake, and the tenth Part of the City fell, and in the Earthquake were ſlain of Men Seven thouſand: And the Remnant were affrighted, and gave Glory to the God of Heaven.

Here we have the *Reſurrection* of theſe Witneſſes, together with the *Conſequents* thereof; their Reſurrection would, no doubt, be moſt ſurpriſing to their Enemies, but the Conſequents more: Yet both theſe are moſt comfortable to the Church of God; for, from that Reſurrection, the World has handed down to them the precious Truths of God to the Salvation of many Souls, and is now a hopeful Seed, promiſing a very glorious Harveſt in due Time; yea, has actually been fruitful ſince that Time, tho' we muſt regrate, our Improvement anſwers not the Pains the Lord has been taking on us. But I come to conſider the Contents of theſe Verſes, in theſe two Generals propoſed;

I. There is the Reſurrection of theſe Witneſſes, *v.* 11. It is certain, that Reſurrection is not always to be taken in a ſtrict Senſe, for the raiſing up of the ſame individual Body; for, even doctrinally, we read of it in a ſpiritual Senſe, *Col.* iii. 1. *If ye then be riſen with Chriſt*: Where, to be ſure, there is an Alluſion to the Reſurrection of our bleſſed Lord; yet we would miſs the Scope of the Text, if we take the Riſing of theſe *Coloſſians* for a real and proper Reſurrection, for the whole Strain of the Chapter ſhews us, it is to be meant of Regeneration; and much leſs in a prophetick Strain are we to take it properly, as is plain from *Chap.* xx. of this Book. And yet, I am of the Mind, we are not to underſtand it of that Reſurrection the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks of, tho', I own, it muſt not be excluded, but, upon all Accounts, included. Now, that we may attain

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ſome View of this, we would conſider, 1. The Time of this Reſurrection. 2. The Cauſe thereof. 3. The Evidence thereof.

1. There is the Time of their Reſurrection, *After three Days and an Half.* I have no Doubt, but μετα here muſt neceſſarily ſignify *immediately after*; tho', I own, it is not always to be ſo underſtood in Scripture: And ſome think, We ſhould not take it too narrowly here. But, I think, to any that conſiders the Context, we cannot miſs to underſtand it ſtrictly, *i. e.* immediately upon the Expiration of the *three Days and an Half*, and that this muſt be computed from their Death; but whether *thoſe three Days and an Half* is to be deduced from that Space the *Gentiles* are to tread under Foot the *Holy City*, I confeſs, is hard to determine, unleſs we would allow, even theſe Witneſſes, during theſe three Days and an Half, to give a Continuation of their Teſtimony, which is no incredible Thing, ſeeing, in their very loweſt, and moſt abject Condition, no doubt, they would be mindful of their main Work. But, as I ſaid before, it will break no Squares whichever Way we take it; for, if there be an Addition of theſe *three Years and an Half*, it will only ſwell the Number to 1263 Years and an Half, which is but a ſmall Variation amongſt *Chronologers*: Yet the Difficulty is moſt pinching, when theſe Witneſſes died, as we will afterwards find.

2. The Cauſe of this Reſurrection, *The Spirit of Life from God entred into them.* There ſeems to be a twofold Alluſion here; One to the Animation of *Adam*, Gen. ii. 7. *God breathed into his Noſtrils the Breath of Life, and Man became a living Creature.* Another to the dry Bones in *Ezekiel*'s Viſion, *Ezek.* xxxvii. 5. where the Lord ſays, *I will cauſe Breath to enter into you, and ye ſhall live.* And afterwards, *v.* 10. *So I propheſied as he commanded me, and the Breath came into them, and they lived, and ſtood upon their Feet.* Whence 'tis plain, the *Cauſe* of this Life is truly *Divine*. Nor need we be at great Pains to diſtinguiſh between the *Holy Ghoſt*, and the ſubjective Principle of Quickning infuſed by him into theſe Witneſſes, ſeeing they can differ no more than the neceſſary Effect from an effectual Cauſe, and the one does always ſuppoſe the other; yet it is plain, the *Effect* is what we are called, in a particular Manner, to view. As at the Beginning I endeavoured to prove, That neither the *Scriptures* without the true Profeſſors thereof, nor Profeſſors without the Scriptures, can conſtitute theſe Witneſſes, but both conjunctly; ſo to be ſure *a Spirit of Life from God*, correſponding to both, is to be here underſtood: And ſo it will conſiſt of theſe Particulars,

(1.) The Spirit of God going along with the Scripture, *to open the Minds of Men, and make them ſee what is the Hope of his Calling*: This is what the Prophet calls the *revealing the Arm of the Lord.* And while the Word and Spirit are coupled together, they make up what the Apoſtle *James* calls *the ingrafted Word, which is able to ſave Souls.* By this Energy of the *Spirit of God*, all theſe falſe Gloſſes, which *Antichriſt* had put upon the *Scriptures*, will be detected, and the *Truths of God* will appear in their original and radiant Luſtre: The Want of this is what the *Church of Chriſt* has long had too much Reaſon to lament; But then the Fulneſs of the Bleſſing of the Goſpel will attend the Purity of its Diſpenſation, and it will then be fulfilled, *That the Entrance of God's Word giveth Light.*

(2.) That God will graciouſly raiſe up, in the Room of ſuch as were honoured to *ſeal* his Truths with their *Blood*, others, every Way as knowing, prudent, and zealous, as theſe taken out of the Way; ſo that they were to appear like *John Baptiſt*, acted by the *Spirit of Elias*, which will be a Kind of *Reſurrection*, but nearer than we can well imagine; for if there was to be any Odds in Advantage, the Succeſſors would be bleſſed with the ſame. It was a memorable Expreſſion of *John Huſs*, concerning *Luther* and himſelf, when the Empire had broke Faith to him, and murdered him under Truſt; he told them, They had killed a *Gooſe*, meaning himſelf; but a *Swan* ſhould ariſe, it ſhould not be in their Power to deſtroy, meaning *Luther*.

(3.) That God will infuſe Courage and Magnanimity into theſe when thus raiſed up; and ſo it ſhall not be in the Power of their Enemies to bear them down as formerly: This was evident, in a moſt eminent Manner, at the *Reformation*, when theſe great Men did truly look like ſuch as had riſen from the Dead: It muſt be owned, more than an ordinary Spirit was in them; and beſides, *a Wiſdom was given them, their Enemies were not able to reſiſt.*

(4.) Whereas formerly they were deſpiſed, now ſuch a notable Turn of Affairs will caſt up, as ſtrike with Aſtoniſhment all Beholders; and then there is Reaſon to believe, a Temper will be on the Minds of People, that will engage them to liſten to the Things that are ſaid.

(5.) That theſe who, in the Heat of the Conflict with *Babylon*, had in a cowardly Manner turned their Back upon Chriſt, and it may be renounced the precious Truths of the Goſpel, through Fear, or ſome worſe Principle, will with Repentance

retract, and with Courage and Conſtancy, follow the noble Example of *Peter's* Adherants.

(6.) Theſe who were either *Baniſhed* or *Goal'd* for the Intereſt of Chriſt, ſhall be liberate, and have Acceſs to ſerve the Lord without Diſtraction; all Reſtraints ſhall be removed out of their Way, and their Hearts being enlarged, they will then run in the Way of God's Commands.

If it ſhould be here asked, How can theſe Things be? I am of the Mind, If we had not ſeen ſomething as wonderful within theſe few Centuries, the Queſtion might be puſhing; but ſeeing God has brought about ſo many and great Events, we muſt reſt in this, *It is the Lord's Doing, and is wonderful in our Eyes.* And, however he was pleaſed to uſe Inſtruments, yet their Power was ſmall, but the Concurrence of God made their Efforts effectual; for it would appear the Accompliſhment of this Part of the Prophecy is over and gone.

3. There is the Evidence of their Reſurrection, *And they ſtood upon their Feet.* Some pervert the Tranſlation of the Words, and make it to point at a Progreſs of the Narrative, and ſo the Word would run, *The Spirit of Life from God entred into them, that, or ſo that, they ſtood upon their Feet.* For my Share, beſides the vitiating of the *Original*, and making a Gap in the Senſe, I cannot ſee what the learned *Grotius* would be at with his *Hebraiſms*; for, let us take it in what Senſe we pleaſe, to be ſure their ſtanding upon their Feet, is an Evidence of their Reſurrection. It ſeems plainly to be borrowed from the Prophet *Ezekiel*, Chap. xxxvii. 10. *They ſtood upon their Feet*; for both Expreſſions are in the ſame Manner to be underſtood. Standing, as an Evidence of Reſurrection, ſeems to have theſe Things in it, 1. The *Reality of their Change.* Before they were lying in the Street, now they are able to ſtand upon their Feet; ſo that this is no imaginary Alteration, but muſt be as conſiderable as the Change from Death to Life. 2. Their *Standing* is no ſmall Sign of their *Strength:* That Perſon is not weak, who is able to ſupport and ſtay himſelf upon his Feet. 3. Their *Stedfaſtneſs* againſt both Force and Fraud; and therefore I conclude, After that Time, whatever Shocks the Church may meet with, ſhe will be ſtrengthned to keep her Ground, and the Enemy never ſo far prevail upon her as they had done formerly. 4. Their *Diligence*: Being raiſed up, they are not to loiter out their Time, but carefully to employ it in the Service, and for the Honour of their great Deliverer; for Standing is a Poſture of Service, and not of Idleneſs.

II. There are the *Conſequents* of this Reſurrection in all the reſt of the Words. It cannot be imagined, when ſuch a notable Turn is made upon a miſerable Church, but ſomething will follow of a moſt ſurpriſing Nature; eſpecially if we conſider *who ſlew theſe Witneſſes? who raiſed them? and for what End they were raiſed?* To be ſure ſomething was to be expected on all Hands: And this is what we are now to conſider, in theſe Particulars, 1. With reſpect to their Enemies upon this Sight, ſo unexpected. 2. With reſpect to themſelves, *v.* 12. 3. The Effects upon their Enemies. 4. The Glory that redounded to God.

1. The firſt Conſequent is upon the Spectators, who no doubt were their Enemies; *Great Fear fell upon them which ſaw them.* At this Time all the World were either *Witneſſes*, or *Enemies* to the Witneſſes: Now, having before brought theſe Witneſſes ſo low, and being out of any further Fears about them, yea perfectly ſecure they ſhould torment them no more, it is no Wonder they were in the greateſt Conſternation becauſe of their Reſurrection: As we find, after *Herod* had beheaded *John* in Priſon, and afterwards hearing of Chriſt, it ſtruck him immediately in the Head, *It was* John *riſen again from the Dead*, Luke ix. 7. and he was filled with a Horror from his own guilty Conſcience. What was but imaginary with *Herod*, will be real in *Babylon*, and no Wonder her Surprize be the greater. Here we are to conſider, 1. The Perſons. We need not diſpute whether thoſe that had ſeen their dead Bodies, or ſuch as had ſeen their Reſurrection? for I think theſe are the ſame: For the Difference betwixt the two *Greek* Verbs, I ſee nothing can be brought from them; only this I am ſure, we cannot make the Word θεωρειν ſignify a looking with Delectation, as before we noted ſome contended; for here the Onlookers are filled with *Fear* and *Conſternation.* 2. Their Affection, *They were under great Fear.* Some Sorts of Fear only engage to more Caution, but great Fears *ſtupify* and interrupt the very Exerciſe of Reaſon, it bereaves them of both Heart and Hand: The Notableneſs and Unexpectedneſs of the Change, was the Spring of this Fear. 3. The Way how they were ſeized therewith, *It fell upon them.* Some ſay, It has an Alluſion to the Falling of a Stone from a great Height, which both ſurprizeth with the Suddenneſs, and kills with the Force. We have an Expreſſion to the ſame Purpoſe from *Rahab* to the Spies, *Joſh.* ii. 9. *Your Terror is fallen on us, and all the Land faint becauſe of you.*

2. Con-

2. Conſequent is with reſpect to the Witneſſes, *v.* 12. which is moſt comfortable: And in this we are to conſider, 1. A Call. And, 2. Their ready Obedience thereto, whereby their State was much bettered.

(1.) There is the Call, *They heard a great Voice from Heaven, ſaying unto them, Come up hither.* There are a great many Conceits about this Clauſe, as ſenſleſs as curious; but, that we may ſhift off the whole of them as eaſily as poſſible, I ſhall conſider in the Words theſe few Things, 1. The Manner of the Voice, *A great Voice*, and therefore it is ſaid, *They heard it*: For theſe Witneſſes are repreſented to be on the Earth; and a Voice from Heaven muſt be loud, before they on the Earth hear it. Some bring in a Reading of the Verb, *I heard*; but the Voice was not directed to *John*, but to the *Witneſſes*. Others tell us, It is to be impersonally rendered, *It was heard*: But this is contradicted in the Text; for it is ſaid by Way of Addition, *Saying unto them*, i. e. to the Witneſſes. Here alſo there is made an unreaſonable Difficulty, That this Voice was not only to the Witneſſes, but a general Call to all. What may be their Intendment in this Expoſition, I know not; I am ſorry to find Men of undoubted Integrity go in with this. If they mean to ſhelter any of *Pelagius*'s Brats, I know not: But let us take the Senſe from the Text, to be ſure the Voice was only to theſe that were to go up to Heaven; and this is not the common Privilege of all, as the Anſwer of the Pſalmiſt's Queſtion will ſufficiently determine, *Who is the Man ſhall aſcend unto the Hill of God?* Where we have the Character of the Perſons, which will exactly fall in with theſe Witneſſes. Beſides, (which, in my Opinion, will end the whole Controverſy) the Call is only to theſe that anſwered; and therefore it is added, *And they aſcended up to Heaven.* 2. Whence the Voice came, *From Heaven.* In the Viſion, it points at the Place where the Throne was ſurrounded with the *Elders* and *Living Creatures*; which I have no Doubt, from what is ſaid on Chapter iv. and v. does point out the *Militant Church*: Nay, I need not be at Pains to prove what is ſo generally granted, that this Emblem is plainly ſignificative of the Church. It is evident then, this is not a Call from Civil Authority, but really the *Voice of God*, calling his diſtreſſed Witneſſes to aſſemble themſelves together in Form of a Church; and has wrapt up in it a Promiſe of both Protection and Direction. The Witneſſes may be well thought to be ſcattered before, but now they are gathered together for their mutual Strength and Comfort. 3. To whom this Voice came, *ſaying unto them*, i. e. to the Witneſſes: Either it muſt be to them, or to theſe that killed them, or to both. To ſay it is to their Enemies, is to verify what our Lord ſays, *The Time cometh, when they who kill you will think they do God good Service*: Whereas our Lord inſinuates their great Miſtake; and yet there ſhould be none, if the Murderers were called up to Heaven upon the Back of their Malefice. If we ſhould with ſome ſay, It is to both, where will the Difference be betwixt *Friends* and *Foes*? I find a more innocent Thought, which ſays, The Voice is only to the Witneſſes, but it will be heard by their Enemies: This is ſo modeſt, it were a Pity to contradict it. One Thing I only crave, That this Conſequent reſpect the Witneſſes, and that it is deſigned for their Advantage, and I ſhall be eaſy about additional Thoughts. 4. The Matter of the Call, *Come up hither*, i. e. to Heaven: Which, in an *enigmatical* or emblematical Senſe, is no more than *Come out of that State to a better*; ſo that it points at the Advancement of the *Witneſſes*. God was to lift up their Head, and exalt them above their Foes, after a gradual Manner, as the Word ſignifies. This Call ſeems to have in it a very gracious Promiſe of God's Preſence in a ſpecial Manner, as was the Privilege of *Moſes*, when God called him up to the Mount. Before they were low, and very low, lying on the Streets; here they were to be exalted and raiſed above that State very far, yea, in a Manner, as far above it, as Heaven is above the Earth.

(2.) The ready Obedience the Witneſſes gave to this Call, alſo *v.* 12. *And they aſcended up to Heaven in a Cloud*; together with the Concomitant thereof, *Their Enemies beheld them.* We are to notice their Obedience; no Wonder it was cheerful, ſeeing God had not only ſtrengthned them for their Work, but had alſo opened a Door for them. Theſe, who by the *Witneſſes* underſtand only the *Scriptures*, are at a Loſs what to make of this Part of the *Prophecy*. And ſome paſs it very lightly over, which is not fair either in them, becauſe this much hampers their Opinion, and ſhould ſpecially be cleared. All own, this is not to be meant of a State of Glory, but of a glorious State of the Church on Earth: Now, to call up the Scriptures to that Church, would ſay, Theſe Members of the Church made a Heaven without the Scriptures; which I believe, upon ſecond Thoughts, none will own. There are two Things here, 1. Their Advancement, *They aſcended up to Heaven*, i. e. as is above ſaid, their State was bettered, and that after a gradual Manner. This ſeems to point at the State of the Church under the *ſeventh Trumpet*; for all the mean Eſtate of the Church will be over by that

Time, and the *Bride, the Lamb's Wife,* will be emerging by Degrees out of her Troubles till then. This is agreeable to the Voice of the Prophet, *Iſa.* xl. 31. *They that wait upon the Lord ſhall renew their Strength, they ſhall mount up with Wings as Eagles.* 2. The Manner of their Motion, *In a Cloud.* This is no doubt with Alluſion to the Children of *Iſrael*'s Departure out of *Egypt*; as alſo to Chriſt's *Aſcenſion.* I ſhewed before, that the *Cloud* is an Emblem of God's Preſence and Glory; and while it is uſed here, it is to aſſure us, that when that happy Time comes, God, in a ſpecial Manner, will honour the Church and Diſpenſation of the Goſpel with his Preſence and Protection: And, as all own, two remarkable Bleſſings will fall to the Share of the Church, *Honour* and *Safety.* The Concomitant of this, *Their Enemies beheld them.* With *Pleaſure* and *Satisfaction* they viewed them expoſed in the Street; but now they ſhall ſee their State bettered, with *Envy* and *Regrate*: The Tables will be now changed, and the Church in a little Time *ſhall ſee her Deſire upon her Enemies. Babylon* grudged the Witneſſes the Sackcloth Condition, and would not ſuffer them to bruik it; but now they muſt have the Mortification to ſee them clothed with White, and out of their Power and Reach.

3. Conſequent is the Effects upon the Enemies of the Witneſſes, *v.* 1. And it would appear this was to happen while *Babylon* was filled with Amazement at the Reſurrection of the Witneſſes; for it is ſaid, *The ſame Hour was a great Earthquake.* As for the Senſe and Meaning of Earthquake, we eſtabliſhed it before on *Chap.* vi. 12. In the ſame Senſe we muſt certainly take here, and ſo it ſignifies a great Commotion or general War; yea, I am inclinable to think that Earthquake ſpoken of there, is the ſame mentioned here, and was the firſt notable Daſh the Affairs of *Babylon* met with. But our Buſineſs now is to conſider the Effects of this Earthquake upon the Enemies of the Witneſſes, and theſe are two,

(1.) *The tenth Part of the City fell.* To be ſure this City is the ſame we heard of before, *v.* 8. And that it is here mentioned again, aſſures us, it was *Babylon,* and not *Jeruſalem,* nor the *Church* under the Emblem of that City. Authors are not agreed as to the Meaning of this *tenth Part*: Some tell us, *Babylon*'s Tribute, called *Tithes,* was to fail at this Time; but this ſeems to be a great Impropriety of Speech, to call the *Tithes* of *Rome* the tenth Part, and yet at the ſame Time to make the whole Revenue conſiſt of Tithes; it would be δεκάτη, and not δέκατον. And beſides, there would be no Uſe for the Word *Part*; ſo that this cannot be the Senſe. Others again, becauſe we read of *ten Horns,* Chap. xiii. and here the City divided into ten Parts, think theſe ten *Horns* muſt conſtitute the ten Parts; and conſequently the falling of the tenth Part, muſt ſignify the falling of *one of theſe Horns.* But ſtill ſomething is wanting to make this run, *viz.* That theſe *ten Horns* make the whole of *Antichriſt*'s *Kingdom,* and that they be equal, if not in Bulk, at leaſt in Strength and Riches; which I believe will be hard to prove. Beſides, the Miſtake is at the Bottom; for neither are we to underſtand *Rome,* nor the whole *Papal Power* and Polity by this City, but all theſe Powers throughout the World, who have ſet themſelves in a ſtated Oppoſition againſt Chriſt and his Kingdom: And therefore, of Neceſſity, we are to underſtand the Diminution of the *Mahometan, Popiſh,* and *Heathen* Powers about a tenth Part. Some, by this Fall, underſtand ſimply a Separation or Defection: I am ready to think more is meant; if not the total Ruin of that Part, yet ſuch a notable Revolution therein, that it ſhall have quite another Face; and the rather, that we read of *Slaughter* immediately after. If this may not be meant of the Deſtruction of the *Sarazens* Kingdom by the *Turks,* the great Wars in *Europe,* and the Seceſſion of ſeveral Kingdoms and Provinces from *Rome,* we may have Reaſon to think; beſides what the *Heathen* Nations have met with through the World.

(2.) *And in the Earthquake were ſlain of Men Seven thouſand.* Some would have theſe 7000 to be underſtood of ſeven Families, or Dynaſties, becauſe uſually every Thouſand had a Ruler; And apply this to the Defection of the *ſeven united Provinces.* If we explain Prophecy at this Rate, we may bring ourſelves under very great Hardſhips: Beſides, as one obſerves, it is a very rude Way of treating Scripture. Others tell us, There is here a manifeſt Alluſion to 1 *Kings* xix. 18. where God tells the Prophet, He had *reſerved to himſelf Seven thouſand that had not bowed the Knee to* Baal. But what that Alluſion is, I confeſs, I cannot ſee, unleſs that Seven thouſand are mentioned in both Texts; otherwiſe, there is no Affinity betwixt them at all. Or, if there be an Alluſion to that Place becauſe of the 7000, why not alſo to all the other Places where we read of Seven thouſand? As, when *Samaria* was taken, the *Iſraelites* were numbred, and came to 7000, 1 *Kings* xx. 15. And when *David* ſmote the King of *Zobah,* he took 7000 Horſemen from him, 1 *Chron.* Yet no Body ſeeks an Alluſion to theſe Places, tho', one would think, they are more a-kin to this, than that they have

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pitched on. In the *Greek* it reads, *Of the Names of Men here ſlain.* This alſo adminiſters Ground of Debate: For ſome, by *Names of Men*, underſtand *Men of Name*, *i. e.* of Power, Influence and Authority; As we read *of Men of Renown*, Gen. vi. 4. This ſeems to tell pretty well: But then, ſomething in this ſame Prophecy chokes it, *Chap.* iii. 4. *Thou haſt a few Names in* Sardis, which is neceſſarily to be underſtood of Perſons: And, I think, we ſhould be equal to all the Expreſſions of Scripture, eſpecially in one Portion of it, and let it ſignify the ſame Thing, unleſs ſomething in either the Text or Context hinder: Nor can I ſee any ſuch Reaſon here. Beſides, they ſay, Their being killed, ſignifies no more than their Reformation: This alſo is a very ſtrange Gloſs, eſpecially that they are not at Pains to fortify it by either Scripture or Reaſon. Yet, if we ſhould allow this to be the Total of the Slain of *Babylon*'s Party at this Time, it would ſay the Damage was not ſo great as the Text would inſinuate. It is plain, then, ſomething further is contained in it than is caſten up, or than, perhaps, we ſhall reach: However, I ſhall only note theſe few Things from the Text; 1. That this Slaughter will be very annoying to the whole City, partly from the Cauſe, the terrible Commotions; and partly from the Perſons, who, to be ſure, are ſuch as they knew well, being Fellow-Citizens with them. This will indeed prove them to be at leaſt *Libertines*, if not *Deniſons*; which to me is the greateſt Argument to prove them Perſons of Diſtinction. But then, how many of them belonged to the *Papal* Juriſdiction, and how many to the *Mahometan*, is uncertain; yet, to be ſure, if this touch the thirteenth and fourteenth Centuries, their 7000 may be made greater than *Biſhops*, *Abbots*, &c. 2. It is plain, this Slaughter will be among the Inhabitants of that tenth Part of the City which fell, and by its Fall threatned Ruin to the other nine ſtanding Parts. Again, 3. The Death of theſe Perſons could not miſs to be very ſudden, eſpecially that here it is expreſſed by an Earthquake; this would make the Stroke ſo much the more alarming.

4. The next or laſt Conſequent is the Glory that did redound to God from this Earthquake, and the Slaughter of the 7000; *The Remnant were affrighted, and gave Glory to the God of Heaven.* Here we ſee it was a moſt moving Diſpenſation. I ſhall notice ſhortly, 1. The Perſons. 2. Their Frame of Mind. 3. Their Exerciſe.

(1.) The Perſons, called here the *Remnant*, or the reſt. Some confine this to the tenth Part of the City fell, and ſo the Meaning is, All who lived in that tenth Part. No doubt they would be moſt affected; But we may allow this to extend to the whole City, tho' no doubt the Fear would be greateſt in theſe who were neareſt the Danger. It is a very narrow Senſe ſome give of this, who confine all to *France*, or ſome ſmall adjacent Places; for theſe come very far ſhort of a tenth Part of Myſtical *Babylon*, as we ſhall hear afterwards: But I reckon this takes in a tenth Part of *Aſia* and *Africa*, as well as *Europe*, yea and *America*.

(2.) Their Conſternation, *They were affrighted*; the Words are more ſignificative, *They became Fear*: They were then ſeized with an extraordinary Fear, and may be called a *Pannick Fear*, which bereaves of both Heart and Hand. This is a Paſſion, upon extraordinary Emergents, we find ſometimes invades God's own *People*: So we find Chriſt's Diſciples at the Sepulchre, upon the Sight of *two Angels, affrighted*, Luke xxiv. 5. Yea, all the Eleven were in the ſame Condition, when *Chriſt appeared in the Midſt of them*, v. 37. Yet he was there as their beſt Friend, but here as their Enemy, and whom they had injured long, and much; and no Wonder their Fear was greater. But this is a Paſſion more heavily loads his Adverſaries: So we read, *Numb.* xxii. 3. Moab *was ſore afraid of the People, becauſe they were many.*

(3.) Their Exerciſe, *They gave Glory to the God of Heaven.* We find this in Scripture very often the Concomitant of Fear; ſo it is ſaid, *Luke* v. 26. *They were all amazed, and glorified God, and were filled with Fear.* This is ſpoke of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, upon the View of a Miracle performed on a paralytick Perſon; yet was there no Religion in this. The ſame we find recorded of a very mixt Multitude, conveen'd at the Funerals of the Widow's Son, whom Chriſt in their Sight raiſed from the dead, *Luke* vii. 16. *There came Fear on all, and they glorified God.* So that here we are under no Neceſſity of underſtanding this as a Sign of a hearty and intire Converſion to God, in this Remnant; tho' I ſhall not doubt but God might thereby work upon the Hearts of ſome in a ſaving Manner: But there is no Ground from this Expreſſion to think ſo of the whole Herd; for God may be ſaid to be glorified, in Scripture-Language, many a Time when the Perſon wants Grace that does it: So the Confeſſion of a ſecret Crime, of publick Influence, is ſaid to glorify God, even tho' there be not ſaving Repentance going along with it, *Joſh.* vii. 19. *And* Joſhua *ſaid unto* Achan, *My Son, give, I pray thee, Glory to the Lord God, and tell me what thou haſt done.* Again, God may be ſaid to be glorified, when his Power is acknowledged in any Emergent; as *the Magicians ſaid unto* Pharaoh, *This is the Finger of God*, Exod. viii. 19. Yea,

the wicked Rulers of the *Jews* adviſed the blind Man, that was cured by our Lord, *to give God the Praiſe*, John ix. 24. Yet did not they not believe in Chriſt. I am ready to think, in theſe two Senſes we may take it here; yet not ſo as intirely exclude the Converſion of any, for ſome might be converted, others hardned, but all be affrighted.

The Deſignation given God here, is, *The God of Heaven*; He was called, *v.* 4. *The God of the Earth*; certainly he is the God of both Heaven and Earth: But this Deſignation is given here, becauſe there will be ſome ſuch concurring Circumſtances attending the Reſurrection of the Witneſſes, the Fall of a Part of the City, and the Death of ſo many of her Inhabitants, by the Earthquake, as will convince, the Hand of God is in this; and that theſe ſtupifying Events are, if not immediately, yet at leaſt manifeſtly from Heaven

It would appear, all contained in this Appendage is over and gone long ſince; and, let us begin the 1260 Years as we will, they muſt be out about Three hundred Years ago, unleſs we would place their Beginning with the Riſe of the *Papal Antichriſt*; and then the Witneſſes are to be killed yet. Nor will we know to what Part of this Prophecy to apply all theſe ſtrange and wonderful Revolutions that happened both to the Church, and to *Babylon*, in the thirteenth and fourteenth Centuries: Yea, the Church muſt at this Day fill themſelves with Apprehenſions of the moſt terrible Diſpenſations that yet ſhe has met with; which, we will find, can never accord with the following Part of this Prophecy. I once intended here to have made a particular Survey of theſe hiſtorical Narratives, and applied them to this Part of the Prophecy; but I conſider theſe Things will fall more naturally in, when we come to the thirteenth and fourteenth Chapters, which are but an Enlargement upon this, as to the laſt Part thereof: And this ſeems to be nothing leſs or more, but a ſhort Account of the wreſtling State of the Church, from about the Time of the Viſion, till the End of the ſixth Seal, when the Church, as we have endeavoured to prove, was to emerge gradually out of her Difficulties: This will be more obſervable, when the Time of the *Trumpets* come; but moſt ſo, when the ſeventh cometh, which comprehends, beſides many other Things favourable to the Church, the ſeven Vials of *God's Wrath upon her Enemies*.

The Spirit of God ſaw it meet to append this Viſion to the ſixth Trumpet, and premiſe it to the ſeventh, tho' it immediately concerns neither; that ſo the beloved Diſciple might be the better prepared to notice and entertain what follows: For, having ſeen the loweſt Step of the Church's Miſery, and the firſt Step of her Deliverance, he could not but be fond to obſerve her ſeveral Steps of Proſperity, till ſhe come to all the Glory ſhe can expect or bruik on Earth.

14 The ſecond Wo is paſt, and behold, the third Wo cometh quickly.

We noticed, that the *three laſt Trumpets* have each a Wo in them; but this *Wo* is to the *Enemies*, two of them are paſt in the fifth and ſixth Trumpets, and now the third remains under the ſeventh. There is an Addition to this Expreſſion here, we had not in the other; it is ſaid, This *Wo cometh quickly*, or in a ſhort Time after the ſecond Wo: There is to be ſome Time betwixt the firſt and ſecond, *viz.* five prophetical Months; there will alſo be ſome Space after that, before the ſixth be over, but then the ſeventh will make no Delay: And, I think, it ſays more, it will do its Errand in a ſhort Time.

TRUMPET VII.

THERE is no doubt but the remaining Part of this Chapter belongs to the ſeventh Trumpet; yet it is not ſo clear, if the three ſubſequent Chapters contain Matters to fall out during this Period. If I may be allowed to have any juſt Notion of the Matters handled in them, they are all Events muſt fall out before the ſeventh Trumpet ſound, which will appear when we come at them.

Again, it is queſtioned, If this ſeventh Trumpet comprehends the ſeven Vials mentioned Chapters fifteenth and ſixteenth?

Expoſitors differ much as to this. Some think, they concern different Viſions, which are more diverſe in their Signification than their Types. Others imagine, That *Six of the Vials* belong to the *ſixth Trumpet*. I own, I have ſeen no cogent Reaſon; but the Truth of this will beſt appear, when we come to the Conſideration of the Vials. The next Opinion is, That the ſeventh Trumpet comprehends the whole ſeven Vials.

And

And this I am tempted to go in with, for these Reasons, 1. It seems most agreeable to the Method of this Prophecy; for the seventh Seal comprehends the *seven Trumpets*, as we have seen: And so, in like Manner, it may be presumed, the seventh Trumpet will comprehend the seven Vials. And this represents to us a most beautiful Order of Time, linked together in a Chain of notable Events. 2. The Titles and Conclusions of the Trumpets seem to perswade to this; for the seventh Trumpet is called the *third Wo*, and there are but three of them mentioned, *Chap.* viii. 13. where the Ground of this Designation is, Because of the Angels yet to sound, and these are only three, the *fifth*, *sixth*, and *seventh Trumpets*; therefore this must contain the last Wo: And, *Chap.* xv. 1. the seven Vials are expresly designed the seven last Plagues of God. Now, it is not conceivable, how there should be *seven Plagues* after the *last Wo*; and so these *seven Vials* must be comprehended in this *seventh Trumpet*. 3. The *seventh Trumpet* contains in general, *v.* 18. of this Chapter, all that is wrapt up in the *seven Vials* more particularly; and the General is, the Destruction of them that corrupt the Earth, which respects the Enemies of Christ's Kingdom: Yet to be sure these are not to be twice destroyed, once under the seventh Trumpet, and another Time under the seven Vials.

There is another preliminary Question, Whether this *seventh Trumpet* contains any more than the *seven Vials*?

I answer, If no more be wrapt up in that Expression, *The Finishing of the Mystery of God*, but the *seven Vials*, Chap. x. 7. then we may make the *seven Vials* to exhaust the *seventh Trumpet*: But, if more be included in that Expression, which I believe all will own, then we must extend the Comprehension of this Trumpet to the whole of the Accomplishment of that Mystery; which, I believe, none will affirm, concerns only the Enemies of the Church, but the State of the Church also: And this *seventh Trumpet* must be allowed to carry on that happy *Millennium* promised by the Prophets, and contained in that Mystery of God; and so this *seventh Trumpet* seems to close the whole Dispensation of the Will and Counsel of God to Mankind: And therefore, I am ready to think, the last five Verses of this Chapter give us a summary Account of the whole *seventh Trumpet*, which, I think, takes in the *Calling of the* Gentiles, the *Reduction of the* Jews, with the *Destruction of* Antichrist; which, after all, I am ready to believe, will fall in betwixt the Fulness of the *Gentiles*, and the Conversion of the *Jews*, and will be of no small Use to reduce them to their first Husband, from whom they had so long wandered.

It is objected here, The following *three Chapters* seem necessarily to come under the Comprehension of this *Trumpet*; which cannot be, if these three great Events be contained therein: I only now say, in a Word, what I mind afterwards at Length to prove, That, after the Conclusion of this Chapter, we have an Interruption of the Threed of the Prophecy for all these three Chapters; and, that they represent to us an Illustration of all the former Seals in a very plain Manner, except the fifth, for which we shall offer a Reason: And, that this is done on Purpose to prepare, first *John*, and after him all the Church, for the Consideration of the Vials.

This Trumpet then is the last in Order and Succession, and will probably follow hard upon the sixth, and constitutes the last and greatest Wo to *Babylon*. Where we have to consider these Parts (which, I think, will cast up what I advanced before about it) 1. The Language of the Voices, *v.* 15. 2. The Behaviour and Speech of the Elders, *v.* 16, 17, 18. 3. The Vision of the Temple, *v.* 19. It is evident we have no formal Emblem in this Trumpet after the Sounding thereof, till we meet with the Vials; yet we have both Voices and Visions, that may well supply the Place of one, till we come to the Vials.

15 And the seventh Angel sounded, and there were great Voices in Heaven, saying, The Kingdoms of this World are become the *Kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.

After the Sound of the Trumpet, we have here to consider, 1. The Publication, by Voices. 2. The Things these Voices published.

I. There is the Publication, or the Manner by which these Things were discovered, *There were great Voices in Heaven, saying*, or, *There were made great Voices*; so that it was industriously done. We find little to hinder us, and therefore I shall take it up in these Particulars;

1. *There were Voices*, i. e. more than one, yet all of them to the same Purpose; so that they make a most agreeable Consort. It appears to be a most quaint Thought, that these Voices were of the four living Creatures which immediately encompassed the

Throne; that which fortifies this Fancy is, We read of the four and twenty Elders, *v.* 16. And it ſeems very meet to imagine both the *Living Creatures* and the *Elders* to conſpire when the Kingdom of Chriſt is come to its Maturity, as well as they wrought to others Hands when the Church was in an *Infantine State*. And thus we have the *Means* or *Inſtruments* pointed at, by which *all the Kingdoms of this World ſhall become the Kingdoms of Chriſt*, even by the Miniſters of the Goſpel.

2. They are *great Voices*, i. e. audible, with *Courage* and *Authority*: Here there is plain Dealing; deaf Perſons muſt be ſpoke loudly to. It further points at the Import of the Thing, and therefore it is pronounced after a very audible Manner.

3. Theſe Voices were *made*, i. e. fram'd and ordered; it was given them what to ſay, they were not to cry any Thing they pleaſed, but were to be regulated by a Rule, *viz.* the Word of God; *For fit Words is the greateſt Ornament of Speech.*

4. Where *John* heard theſe Voices, *in Heaven*, the Place of Viſion, and emblematically the Church: That Church modeled by the *Reed of God*, as we heard, *v.* 1. which is the true Goſpel-Doctrine of Chriſt.

II. That which was publiſhed, *The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms*, &c. Here we have an Account of a very wonderful and univerſal Change in the World, and this I take to be the *Calling of the* Gentiles, from the Turns of Expreſſion in the Voice: But, that we may have ſome clearer Diſcoveries of this comfortable Truth, I ſhall notice, 1. On what this Change is made. 2. To what they are changed. 3. How they become ſo. 4. How long this Kingdom, thus erected, will continue.

1. On what this Change is made, *The Kingdoms of this World*, or, *the Kingdoms of the World*, which is more agreable to the firſt Language: Where I ſhall notice, to bring down the Matter to our Underſtanding, theſe Terms in the Text, 1. Their general Character, *Kingdoms*; which is not only to be meant in Oppoſition to ſmall Societies, but alſo to one or a few Kingdoms. Yea, ſeeing we have no Limitation, it challenges us to take it univerſally, as we have it expreſſed, *Chap.* xv. 4. *All Nations ſhall come and worſhip before thee.* This is confirmed by *Daniel*, Chap. vii. 14. *There was given unto him Dominion, and Glory, and a Kingdom, that all People, Nations, and Languages ſhould ſerve him*: Than which, nothing can be more extenſive. 2. The Quality of theſe Kingdoms, *Of this World*, or *of the World*; which not only proves them to be *humane*, but alſo *corrupted*, before the *Change*; that they were *worldly* in the Complexions of their Souls, and in their *Deſigns*. In this Senſe we find our Lord uſe it, *John* viii. 23. *Ye are of this World, I am not of this World.* So that it points at a graceleſs and godleſs World, in downright Oppoſition to God.

2. To what they are changed; they had their Deſignation before from the World, now they have it from *our Lord and his Chriſt*, i. e. they were moulded according to the *Will of God*; had Chriſt their King; owned no Pope, King, or Biſhop, in his Room or Stead: And further, it ſhews they could have no Relation to God, but in and through Jeſus Chriſt; and is in Effect the ſame with theſe Words, 1 *John* ii. 23. *Whoſo denieth the Son, the ſame hath not the Father.*

3. How they became ſo? *become* or *made*. It is the ſame Word which ſignifies *Creation*, John i. 1. ſo that an omnipotent Hand concurs to this Change: And then will that Prophecy be verified, *Iſa.* lxvi. 8. *Shall a Nation be born at once?* Here there ſeems to be a ſpecial Eye to the Subjection of theſe Nations to Chriſt, owning and obeying him in all his Laws and Conſtitutions, in Oppoſition to all Uſurpers.

4. How long this Kingdom will continue? or, how long this Kingdom will reign? *He ſhall reign for ever and ever. Daniel* ſays, *Chap.* vii. 14. *His Dominion is an everlaſting Dominion, which ſhall not paſs away, and his Kingdom that which ſhall not be deſtroyed.* This Expreſſion has moved ſome to underſtand this of *Chriſt's glorious Kingdom*; but it is manifeſtly here to be taken for the Kingdom of Grace, which may be alſo juſtly deſigned *Eternal*, becauſe Chriſt never changeth his Subjects, and Grace changeth itſelf only into Glory; the Difference betwixt *Grace* and *Glory* being but gradual, and not in Kind. But here, in a ſpecial Manner, it is oppoſed to the *Kingdom of* Antichriſt, of which more hereafter.

Object. Antichriſt is not ſaid here to be fallen; and conſequently all the *Kingdoms of the World cannot become the Kingdom of Chriſt. Anſw.* This ſhews, if there be not an actual Change at this Time, yet it is very near it; Yea, the Spreading of the *Goſpel will be one ſpecial Way*, how *Chriſtleſs Kingdoms will fall.*

Some again tell us, This is no more than what has been ſince the Commencement of Chriſtianity, for ſome of all Nations have been converted to the Faith of Chriſt. That I may anſwer this Difficulty ſomewhat pointedly, I ſhall, 1. Enquire into the Meaning of the *Calling of the* Gentiles. 2. Offer ſome Scripture-Grounds for proving the Truth thereof. 3. Offer a Conjecture or two, how the ſame ſhall be brought about.

Firſt,

First, Then, to know what is the Senſe of the *Calling* or *Converſion of the Gentiles*: The Scripture ſpeaks of a *twofold Calling of the Gentiles*; One *partial*, another *total*. The firſt took Place under the Miniſtry of the Apoſtles, when God had rejected the *Jews*, Rom. xi. 11. *Through their* (the *Jews*) *Fall, Salvation is come to the* Gentiles. And yet more plainly, *v.* 15. *If the Caſting away of them* (the *Jews*) *be the Reconciling of the World.* So that theſe *Gentiles* were brought in to ſupply the Place of the abandoned *Jews*, as is expreſly aſſerted, *Acts* xiii. 46. Barnabas *and* Paul *waxed bold, and ſaid, It was neceſſary that the Word of God ſhould firſt have been ſpoken to you: But ſeeing you put it from you, and judge yourſelves unworthy of everlaſting Life, lo, we turn to the* Gentiles. And from that Time, hitherto has the Converſion of the *Gentiles*, in a partial Manner, been carried on through the World, and will continue till the Sounding of the *ſeventh Trumpet*; and then will ſucceed the *total* Converſion of the *Gentiles*: This is what we have called *the Fulneſs of the* Gentiles, *Rom.* xi. 25. Which differs from the partial Calling before ſpoken of, in the Senſe of a learned Author, in theſe notable Particulars;

1. That in the *partial* Converſion, there are but ſome of the Nations turned to the Profeſſion of Chriſt; and yet but a very few of theſe Nations will be, and are really converted to him: Whereas, then, *all the Kingdoms of this World will become the Kingdoms of our Lord*; which I am next to prove on the ſecond Head. And if this be made out, the Difference will be notable.

2. In the *partial* Calling of the *Gentiles*, the Goſpel is not tyed to any particular Nation, but is ambulatory from one Kingdom to another. Sometimes we find it prevail among thoſe who were under the Miſts of *Popiſh* or *Paganiſh* Idolatry; Sometimes we ſee Clouds of Error, Idolatry, or Profanity, cover theſe Nations who were bleſſed with the Goſpel; And ſometimes God removes it from theſe again, and brings it back to them, who before had rejected it: Whereas, in the *total* Converſion of the Nations, the *Ark of God's Teſtimony* will not be ambulatory, but ſhall continue in every Nation for the Space of a Thouſand Years. This is a very notable Difference.

3. In the *partial* Call of the Nations, there are only a few of the *Jews* converted, the reſt being bitter Enemies to the Croſs of Chriſt: But the total Converſion of the *Gentiles* will be followed with the *National Reduction of the* Jews, *Rom.* xi. 25. *I would not, Brethren, that ye ſhould be ignorant of this Myſtery, leſt ye ſhould be wiſe in your own Conceit, that Blindneſs in Part is happened to* Iſrael, *till the Fulneſs of the* Gentiles *be come in.* v. 26. *And ſo all* Iſrael *be ſaved.* Now, I take this Text to ſpeak of the total Converſion of the Nations: And am ready to think, when this bleſſed Time comes, it will be as hard to find a Hypocrite in the viſible Church, as now it is to find a real Chriſtian among a Crowd of Profeſſors.

Secondly, We have to prove from Scripture, there will be ſuch a general or univerſal Call of the *Gentiles* as we have been talking of. We will find very old Tokens of *God's Goodneſs* to the Nations: It is propheſied, *Gen.* xvii. 4. Abraham *ſhould be the Father of many Nations*; originally, *The Multitude of Nations*, i. e. all the Nations; for he was conſtitute the Father of all the Faithful, as it is expreſly ſaid, *Gen.* xviii. 18. *All the Nations of the Earth ſhall be bleſſed in him.* We have this very plainly exhibite to our View, *Pſal.* ii. 8. *Ask of me, and I will give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the utmoſt Parts of the Earth for thy Poſſeſſion.* This is by all owned to be a Prophecy of the Extent of *Chriſt's ſpiritual Kingdom*; and that the Meaning is, All the Earth ſhould be given him; not only the Skirts, but the whole World: Which has never fully been made out to this Day, and therefore we are to expect it when the *ſeventh Trumpet* ſhall ſound. This is alſo the Import of that notable Prophecy, *Iſa.* xlix. 5,----13. It is alſo the Subſtance of the whole 60th Chapter of that *Prophecy*, at leaſt to *v.* 15. Many other Places of the Old Teſtament might be produced to the ſame Purpoſe. Nor is the New void of ſuch Evidences: Particularly our Lord tells us, *Luke* xxi. 24. *Jeruſalem*, i. e. the *Jews*, *ſhall be troden under Foot till the Times of the* Gentiles *be fulfilled*, i. e. as One paraphraſeth it, *Till all the* Gentiles *ſhall be brought into the Church.*

Thirdly, We would a little enquire by what Methods the *Gentiles* are to be brought in to the Knowledge of Chriſt. It is not to be ſuppoſed that the Emiſſaries of *Antichriſt* will be honoured with this Work; nay, we are ſure they have rather obſtructed than furthered the ſame: For in many Places of the Eaſt and Weſt *Indies*, the Popiſh Miſſioners graceleſs Lives have prejudiced the poor Heathens againſt the Goſpel of Chriſt; The Covetouſneſs and Cowardice of their Prieſts, have tempted theſe, amongſt whom they were ſent, to believe there is nothing good in Chriſtianity. The Cruelty of the *Spaniards*, made the *American* ſay, He had rather go to Hell, as bad as it is, than live in Heaven, as good as it is, with the bloody *Spaniard.* We are then to ſeek the

Way ſomewhere elſe: And it would appear this Context helps well thereto, which we may notice in theſe Steps;

1. There have been ſome remarkable Strokes of *God's Juſtice*, ſome of which we have ſeen, as in *v.* 13. of this Chapter, both upon the *Pope* and *Mahomet*.

2. God will raiſe up fit Tools for this Work, with all neceſſary Accompliſhments of both Piety and Literature, accompanied with Wiſdom, Zeal, and Courage; for he never had a Work to do, and was at a Loſs for Inſtruments: He has the *Reſidue* of the *Spirit*.

3. God will accompany their Endeavours with the *Fulneſs of the Bleſſing of the Goſpel*, and will open a great Door and effectual to them, ſo that nothing ſhall be able to gainſtand them. Theſe three being joined together, are able to make all the Nations bow before him; but where this Work will begin, or what Courſe it will take, as there is nothing to that Purpoſe in the Text, ſo the Methods ſome have given, are all conjectural, and hampered with manifold Difficulties; and beſides, have a Scent of ſinful Curioſity.

16 And the four and twenty Elders which ſat before God in their Seats, fell upon their Faces, and worſhipped God,

17 Saying, We give thee Thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and waſt, and art to come, becauſe thou haſt taken to thee thy great Power, and haſt reigned.

18 And the Nations were angry, and thy Wrath is come, and the Time of the Dead that they ſhould be judged, and that thou ſhouldſt give Reward unto thy Servants the Prophets, and to thy Saints, and them that fear thy Name, ſmall and great, and ſhouldſt deſtroy them which deſtroy the Earth.

In this we have the Behaviour and Speech of the *Elders*: As for the Perſons, we had them before, as here deſcribed, *Chap.* iv. 4. Their Poſture of Adoration, we had alſo, *v.* 10. of that ſame Chapter. So that it remains we notice their *Speech*, which they advance here as the Matter of their Thankſgiving, or Grounds thereof; for we alſo ſpoke of this Doxology, *Chap.* iv. 8, 9. The reſt we have in the Cloſe of *v.* 17. and the Whole of *v.* 18. which we take up in two Grounds of Thankſgiving; The firſt general, *v.* 17. The other particular, *v.* 18.

I. There is a general Ground of Thankſgiving, which, however, we are to conſider in a ſpecial Manner adapted to the Occaſion, in theſe Words, *Becauſe thou haſt taken to thee thy great Power, and haſt reigned.* And here we have Chriſt's *Preparatory Work, and the Exerciſe thereof.*

1. There is Chriſt's preparatory Work, *Thou haſt taken to thee thy great Power.* Something has been thought hard in this Expreſſion, as if he ſhould have ſomething now, which he had not before; and therefore, they flee to Figures and Trops about it, that nothing unworthy of God might be dropt: But I ſee no Need of this; For, while it is ſaid, He took this Power to him, it ſays he might have taken it ſooner if he had pleaſed; and, that it is ſaid he had as it were only now reigned, does not ſay he had no Government of the World before, but only that he ruled now in a more notable Manner. But we would notice a little, 1. The Object. 2. The Exerciſe or Act.

(1.) We have the Object or Thing, *Thy great Power*, δύναμις, which properly ſignifies Vertue, or a Strength managed by Wiſdom: It does not ſignify Authority or Right as ſome would have it, for Chriſt had always theſe; but it denotes a practical Power, which makes him fit for reigning, eſpecially over Enemies. This Power has a notable Qualification, for it is called *Great*; which ſays it will be a Power never before exerted, at leaſt to that Pitch: He has indeed diſcovered much Power in the Propagation of the Goſpel ſince its Infancy; but all that Power was ſmall in Compariſon of what he had, and then will employ, when he will make the Nations bow before him. Again, there is the Peculiarity of this *Power*, *Thy Power*; it is what was beſtowed upon him upon the Score of his Purchaſe, he bought it dear, and might therefore freely uſe it: And ſo he is ſaid to be *that ſtrong One, on whom Help is laid.*

(2.) The Act, *Thou haſt taken to thee*: Which does not ſuppoſe he wanted it before; for, if he had, he could never have made himſelf ſtronger than he was: Yet it certainly implies he had not before uſed it in ſuch a Degree as he will do then; As a Man may have much Strength, as had *Samſon*, and not exert it at all Times: Nay, he may conceal

ceal it, till in his Wiſdom he ſees it meet to make a Diſplay thereof to Purpoſe. Which is alſo obſervable in *Samſon* (a notable Type of Chriſt) who did not always imploy his utmoſt Power, but waited an Opportunity: And ſo it will be with Chriſt, our *true Samſon*; for he was only a dark Repreſentation of Chriſt. We have the *Spirit of God* ſpeaking to the ſame Purpoſe in ſeveral Places, as, *Pſal.* lxxiv. 11. *Why withdraweſt thou thy Hand, even thy Right-hand? pluck it out of thy Boſom.* And again, *Iſa.* lii. 10. *The Lord hath made bare his holy Arm* [i. e. diſcovered the ſame] *in the Eyes of all Nations, and all the Ends of the Earth ſhall ſee the Salvation of our God.* Which Prophecy, I am ready to think, has a ſpecial Eye to this Period of the Church: And, to be ſure, the Nations, who, in Compariſon of God, are but like the ſmall Duſt in the Balance, when his great Power is put forth, muſt either bow or be broken before him; which is the Scope of the Place.

2. There is the agreeable Exerciſe of this Power, *And haſt reigned.* No doubt God always *reigned in* Jacob, *and to the Ends of the Earth*: So that this is not to be underſtood of *God's eſſential Government*; nay, nor *abſolutely* of his mediatory Government, which Chriſt has exerciſed at all Times, both under the Old and New Teſtament: But we are to underſtand it of a more extended Exerciſe of that Kingly Power he was inveſted with as Mediator. This will be ſo great, as, in a Manner, will eclipſe all the other and former Steps of his Government. Before, the Kingdom of *Satan* and *Antichriſt* obſcured the *Reign of Chriſt*; but now theſe Kingdoms will come down, and ſo there will be none to debate the Chriſtianſhip with Chriſt, he will reign over them, without Controul, and no Oppoſition ſhall be made ſucceſsfully againſt him.

II. We have this General taken down in Parcels, *v.* 18. which we are to view in theſe Branches; 1. God's Carriage towards the fretting and angry Nations. 2. His Behaviour towards his own People. 3. His thundering Judgments againſt *Antichriſt*.

1. His Carriage towards the fretting Nations, in the Beginning of the Verſe; where we have, 1. The Diſpoſition of the Nations. 2. Chriſt's Reſentment thereof.

(1.) The Diſpoſition of theſe Nations, *They were angry.* By theſe Nations, we are to mean the ſame we did, *v.* 2. who had trampled upon the Church 1260 Years, with great Indignation: And now, that the Witneſſes are not only long before this revived, but in many Attempts victorious, they fret and rage; for they have an implacable Enmity againſt the Church of God, and wait all Opportunities to diſcover the ſame, in the moſt tragical Manner. We ſee an Inſtance of their Wrath of old againſt the Apoſtles, *Acts* xvii. 5. *They were moved with Envy, and took to them certain lewd Fellows, and ſet the City in an Uproar.* And then they cry out againſt *Paul* and the other *Chriſtians*, v. 6. *Theſe are the Men that have turned the World upſide down*; tho' they, and their wicked Accompliſhes, were the real Cauſe of all the Troubles and Confuſions in the World, eſpecially that Part of it.

(2.) There is Chriſt's *Reſentment* thereof, *Thy Wrath is come.* God had long born with them, but now his Patience is turned into Wrath againſt them, which he will then diſcover by angry Diſpenſations; for, while it is ſaid, *His Wrath is come*, we are to underſtand it of the *Diſcoveries of his Wrath*, as we find it explained, *Rom.* i. 18. *The Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all Ungodlineſs, and Unrighteouſneſs of Men.* What will be theſe Diſcoveries of *God's Wrath*, we will meet with afterwards in the *ſeven Vials*; yet will not this hinder Chriſt to ſhew Mercy to his own, even while he plagues their Enemies? And this brings to the

2. Branch, which diſcovers Chriſt's Behaviour to his own People, in theſe two Clauſes, *The Time of the Dead that they ſhould be judged, and that thou ſhouldſt give Reward unto thy Servants*, &c. Theſe two are very much perplexed by the different Views of the Learned; All which may be reduced to two of the moſt Moment: Some contend, we are to underſtand this of the *laſt* and *general Judgment*, becauſe they hear of judging the Dead in general, and then of *rewarding* and *puniſhing* ſeverally afterwards. I confeſs, had we not met with other Expreſſions before, that ſeems more pointedly to repreſent the Day of Judgment, and yet we are ſure can intend no ſuch Thing, we might be tempted to believe this plain and eaſy Senſe is really the Scope of the Text. But beſides, we have proven, that the *ſeven Vials* are contained in this *Trumpet*, and that after them we expect the *Millennium*; and therefore we may not, without wreſting the Threed of the whole Prophecy, underſtand this of the laſt Judgment: Nor indeed are we under any Neceſſity from the Words ſo to do, as will appear from their particular Conſideration.

(1.) *The Time of the Dead that they ſhould be judged.* It is very reaſonable to believe we ſhould repeat the Verb in the firſt Part of the Verſe, *is come*; where we have to notice, 1. The Object, the *Dead*; or more fully, the *Time of the Dead*; or, as the Words may be read, the *Seaſon* or *Occaſion of the Dead*, and ſo the *Time*

is no leſs the Object of the Judgment, than the *Dead*: Nor do I ſee how we can better underſtand this than of the *ſlain Prophets*, of which we heard before, *v.* 7, 8. God will remember the Hardſhips they met with, when he is to make Inquiſition for their Blood. This will be plainer, when we conſider, 2. The Act, *That they ſhould be judged*; where Judging is not to be taken for the final Judgment, becauſe then the Quick, as well as the Dead, will be judged: Here it ſeems to ſignify, he will avenge them, or plead their Cauſe againſt their Enemies, and makes the Sentence of his People *to come forth from before himſelf*; as *David* pleads, *Pſal.* xvii. 2. In this Senſe, we have the Word often taken in Scripture, *Deut.* xxxii. 36. *The Lord ſhall judge his People, and repent himſelf for his Servants.* So *David* prays, *Pſal.* xxvi. 1. *Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in mine Integrity.* In this Senſe we have it taken in this Prophecy; and to which, I think, this has an Eye, *Chap.* vi. 10. *How long, O Lord, holy and true, doſt thou not judge and avenge our Blood?*

(2.) Clauſe, *And that thou ſhouldſt give Reward unto thy Servants the Prophets, and to the Saints, and them that fear thy Name, ſmall and great.* Here alſo we may repeat *the Time is come*, which will help to clear the Senſe. We ſhall notice, 1. The Object in ſeveral Expreſſions, which may be reduced to two: *Prophets*, this muſt be underſtood of the *Miniſters of the Goſpel.* Theſe who take this as a Deſcription of the Day of Judgment, mean the Prophets of the Old Teſtament raiſed from the Dead; and yet we have not one Word of the Reſurrection; And to put it in, without Countenance from the Text, is not fair. Theſe Prophets are deſigned God's *Servants*, becauſe, in all they did, the obſerved the Commandments of their great Lord, and did all for his Honour and Glory. Again, they are called *Saints*, denoting their Quality; they were not only ſanctified in their Work, but in their Perſons, as all true Prophets ſhould be. The next Claſs is, *Them that fear thy Name*; which we are to underſtand of all Believers and private Chriſtians, who muſt, if they would come up to the Standard of true Piety, be ſuch as *fear God*; for, by the *Name of God*, we are to underſtand God himſelf: This we find to be the ordinary Character of a godly Perſon, *Job* i. 1. *One that feareth God, and eſcheweth Evil.* And ſo it is ſaid of *Cornelius*, Acts x. 2. *He was a devout Man, and One that feared God.* Theſe are again canton'd out in two Degrees, *ſmall and great*, which ſome think reſpects their Progreſs or Advancement in Religion; ſome being arrived to a greater Conſiſtency, and others but weaker in the Faith. Others again would have it meant of their State in the World, ſome being more honourable and great, while others are mean in their worldly Condition; The Thing I think certainly true of both, and ſo there is no Need of any Struggle 2. The Act, *That thou ſhouldſt give Reward.* As we ſhewed the Judgment is not to be underſtood of the laſt Judgment, neither are we to take this Reward as the final Glorification of the Elect: It muſt certainly be underſtood of ſome temporal Reward God will beſtow on his Church, yet no doubt as a Prelude or Earneſt of that *full Recompence of Reward* in Heaven, will be beſtowed on them that love and ſerve God. This Reward therefore I take to point at the bleſſed State of the Church during the *Millennium.* If it ſhould be ſaid, They cannot be called *the Dead.* I anſwer, Tho' their Lot will be more comfortable than that of their Fathers, yet God will reward them the Toil and Sufferings their Predeceſſors underwent; but we will meet with this more opportunely afterwards. There is, *laſtly*, to be noticed the Time here pointed at, in theſe Words, *The Time is come*; i. e. the ſet or appointed Time, which anſwers to the *Oath of the Angel*, Chap. x. 6. *That Time ſhould be no longer.* And here it is ſaid to *be come*: So we are to believe there is a *preciſe Time* fixed by God, tho' we cannot certainly reach the ſame, further than that it will be after the Expiration of the 1260 Years before ſpoken of.

3. God's Judgments againſt *Antichriſt*, *And ſhouldſt deſtroy them that deſtroy the Earth.* Here alſo we are to underſtand theſe Words, *the Time is come.* There is ſome Odds about the Tranſlation of this laſt Clauſe of the Text: I own, I ſee little Need for it; for the ſame Word expreſſeth their Sin and Judgment. And it ſeems a very light Thing, whether we render the Word διαφθεῖρειν *to deſtroy*, *to corrupt*, or *to conſume*: All theſe Significations are much a-kin to one another, and may all be juſtified from Scripture. All, I think, we are to notice now, is the Concordance betwixt their Sin and their Judgment: To find out this very ſhortly, We ſhall notice, 1. The Deſignation of the Perſons, which comprehends their Guilt. 2. The Doom and heavy Sentence execute upon them.

(1.) There is the Deſignation of the Perſons, *Which deſtroy the Earth.* It is not ſpecified what Deſtruction theſe made upon the Earth; and therefore it will be juſt in us not to limit it. We are pretty ſure of the Nature of the Perſons, that they are no other than the Enemies of the *Witneſſes*: And the Way how they deſtroyed, is ſo evi-

dent,

dent, as not need any Explication; for it was their Work to deſtroy both *morally* and *phyſically*. Only this Difficulty reſts, they are ſaid to *deſtroy the Earth*, which we find to be ſo taken above, in Oppoſition to the Church: But this will evaniſh, if we conſider that *Babylon* not only corrupted the Church, but alſo others; and from the Univerſality of their Work, both in Point of the *Object*, the Children of God and others, and their Exerciſe, acting both naturally to the Ruin of their Perſons, and morally to the Deſtruction of their Principles. And thus it will comprehend not only the vicious Principles of *Heathens*, *Mahometans*, and *Papiſts*, but alſo the Cruelties all the three exerciſed againſt the Church, to deſtroy both the Purity of Doctrine, and the Lives of the Profeſſors of the Doctrine of Salvation: This then is a moſt extenſive Signification.

2. Their heavy Doom, *Thou ſhalt deſtroy them.* This they ſaid, by that ſame Spirit of Prophecy they ſpoke the reſt: But as before they had commended the *Mercy of God*, here his *Juſtice is their Song.* I noted before the Proportion betwixt their *Sin* and their *Judgment*; only here we would conſider, tho' God may be the juſt and holy Cauſe of Puniſhment, which is a phyſical Deſtruction, yet we may not think him to have an *active Hand* in the *moral Evils* of any of his Creatures; for that is inconſiſtent with his holy Nature, further than in Juſtice to give them up to their Sin and incorrigible Temper: The full Comprehenſion of this, I take to involve the whole ſeven Vials, of which we are to hear afterwards. Here therefore I paſs the Notion of Deſtruction, which we have in Scripture very often, pointing out eternal Damnation; believing, after what is ſaid, there is no Occaſion to notice the ſame, or to eſtabliſh any other Senſe of the Word in this Place, than that it ſignify a temporal Ruin to his Enemies, carried on by ſeveral Steps, till it arrive at the laſt, we find mentioned in the Cloſe of Chapter xix. And from the whole, we may notice the Harmony of theſe Voices we had, *v.* 15. which we thought might be preſumed to be the Voices of the *four Living Creatures*, and this Voice of the *Four and twenty Elders*: For to be ſure the Kingdoms of this World can never become the *Kingdoms of Chriſt*, ſo long as *Antichriſt* hath ſo many of them under his Yoke.

This Scripture doth ſo naturally lead us to talk, at leaſt in general, as to the *Fall of Antichriſt*, which I think a Word comprehenſive of all the Enemies of the *Mediator's Kingdom*, which we may afterwards have more Reaſon to eſtabliſh; I think it would not be impertinent, from Scripture a little to eſtabliſh this general Truth, that *Antichriſt* or *Babylon* ſhall fall; the laſt Part of this Verſe gives ſo fair an Occaſion, I ſee not how we can let it ſlip: And eſpecially, that the Doctrine may be ſo comfortable to the Church, whoſe daily Prayers are for the Overthrow of the *Pope* and *Mahomet*. Tho' I am ſorry to find the Learned confine all their Thoughts of *Babylon* and *Antichriſt* to the *Papal Kingdom*, while in all Reaſon we ſhould allow the *Mahometans* to go ſnips therewith, both in the Sin and Judgment. And tho' the *Pope* had his Riſe before *Mahomet*, and will probably alſo fall before him, yet, in regard the laſt is moſt neglected, and no leſs true than the former, I incline to make the firſt Eſſay upon the Fall of the *Mahometan Deluſion*, and then to ſpeak a Word of the *Papal*; and in the laſt Place, to ſtate a ſhort and modeſt Enquiry, by what Means theſe two capital Enemies of *Chriſtianity* will be demoliſhed. A weak Performance in theſe, if ſupported by probative Grounds, but in the ſecond Degree, may be of ſpecial Service; and therefore I undertake the Task with the more Cheerfulneſs.

I begin with the *Mahometans*, who have now continued to be the *Plague* of the Church for the Space of about Eleven hundred Years, and have ſpread their Errors through all *Aſia*, *Africa*, and a good Part of *Europe*, and is this Day one of the greateſt Hinderances to the Spreading of the Goſpel. Tho' there be great Diviſions among the Followers of this *falſe Prophet*, yet they are all unanimous againſt the *Chriſtian Religion*. That this Power will certainly be broken, is probable to any that think ſeriouſly of God's Love to his Church; but that it will be brought to nought, nothing but the Word of God can give Aſſurance: And from this Fountain of all Truth, I am to fetch what I have to ſay on this Head, and ſhall reduce them to theſe few Particulars.

1. If *Mahomet*, and theſe Powers that adhere to his Principles, be that *Gog* and *Magog*, (or a Part of them) we read of in the Prophecies of *Ezekiel*, Chapters xxxviii. and xxxix. then he will certainly come down at the Rearing up of the *ſpiritual Temple*. Many Expoſitors, of great Name, and whoſe Praiſe is in the Churches, plainly aſſert this. We have ſeen, oftner than once, this beloved Apoſtle, and the Prophet *Ezekiel*, have the very ſame Threed of Prophecy, and many a Time the ſame Thoughts and Expreſſions; which, in my humble Opinion, proves they ſpeak of the ſame Period: And we find the Fall of *Gog* is immediately before the Meaſuring of the Temple. And

if the Temple of *Ezekiel* be the *ſame Temple* mentioned in this *Revelation*, as never any offered to diſprove, then to be ſure that *Gog* is none elſe but *Mahometaniſm*, comprehending the *Turks*, *Perſians*, *Emperors of Indoſtan*, *Morocca*, and other *Mahometan Kingdoms* in the World: And conſequently that falſe Religion will come down; and, by its Fall, God will make Way for the Propagation of the Goſpel.

2. All Seducers, that corrupt the Earth, ſhall be conſumed and deſtroyed; this is the very Words of the Text. It will need little Proof that *Mahomet* is ſuch, but it will be only Time to prove this from the ſecond Part of Chapter xiii. And hence I conclude, God will bring him down. Can we think that this *Monſter*, that contends with the *Pope* himſelf, in point of Enmity againſt the Church, can eſcape? Eſpecially, that in ſo notable a Manner he robs Chriſt of his *Prophet's Office*, as the *Pope* does of both his *Prieſtly* and *Kingly*. Nor has his Influence been of a narrower Circumſcription; for the largeſt and moſt fertile Parts of the Earth, are at this Day under his Power: For, beſides all *Aſia*, and the far greater Part of *Africa*, his Dominions in *Europe* are computed by *Geographers* to be near 1300 Miles from Eaſt to Weſt, and Odds of 1000 from South to North; which is more than any one Power can lay claim to: And it is without all Controverſy, that his Portion thereof is the moſt fruitful and pleaſant Part thereof. So that, unleſs we would renounce the Doctrine of the actual Providence of God, we muſt believe that falſe Prophet ſhall fall.

3. The Power of the *Turk*, who is no ſmall Promoter of that vile and blaſphemous Rapſody of the *Alcoran*, is much lower now than he was wont to be; this is what all Hiſtorians own. And we know he loſt much in the laſt Wars againſt the *Germans*. The King of *Morocca* has alſo received much Damage from the *Spaniard*. We hear the like of the more diſtant Powers of *Perſia* and the great *Mogul*; beſides the many Ruptures and Seditions have broke out in all theſe Territories, to the great weakning of the main Props which ſupport that falſe Prophet: All which plainly tells us, The ſame is on the Declenſion; yea, we are perſwaded God will not leave them, till he has made a full End of them, and ſo make Room for his own Church.

4. *Mahomet* had his Riſe much about the Time of the *Papacy*; and, as we ſhall hear afterwards, copied after him both in *Principle* and Maxims of *Policy*, (for indeed the *Pope* always led the Dance) ſo that they were equally formidable to the Church, and conſequently equally hateful to God, and therefore it is more than probable they will fall much about a Time: Yea, if we underſtand the ſubſequent Part of this Prophecy, in its fulleſt Extent, we ſhall not be able to diſtinguiſh betwixt the Deſtruction of the one and the other; for we find, *Chap.* xix. 20. the *Beaſt* and the *falſe Prophet* will be taken at the ſame Time, and both caſt into the Pit.

This leads us to the ſecond Enquiry about the Papal Juriſdiction, which is to prove, That the *Romiſh Hierarchy* ſhall fall. This is a Point all Proteſtants agree in, and many and ſtrong Reaſons are advanced for the ſame; tho' I muſt own, a great many of them are as concluding againſt the *Mahometans* as them. I ſhall not conſume Time in giving a Detail of them all; I only think the moſt Part are narrower in the Concluſion than the Premiſſes will allow: This, 'tis true, is a moſt pardonable Fault, where the Premiſſes prove not too much, which I think none has aſſerted in this Caſe. All I do at this Time, is to offer ſomething for Ground of Comfort to the Church, againſt that impudent and idolatrous Church, will clear this Truth; The Time is faſt approaching when ſhe will fall, and diſcover herſelf not to belong to Chriſt, by theſe few Reaſons;

1. *Daniel* ſeems plainly to point at this, *Dan.* vii. 19. while he deſcribes a Beaſt, very like to what we have in the xiii. Chapter of this Prophecy; it is ſaid to be *diverſe from all others, exceeding dreadful, whoſe Teeth were of Iron, and his Nails Braſs, which devoured, brake in Pieces, and ſtamped the Reſidue with his Feet.* All which is in fewer Words, but to the ſame Purpoſe with what we have *Chap.* xiii. 4,——8. and therefore it is owned by many, that the ſame *Power* is meant in both Places: And the rather that *Daniel* tells us, *v.* 21. *The Beaſt made War with the Saints, and prevailed againſt them.* And then gives us an Account of his Fall, *v.* 26. *But the Judgment ſhall ſit, and they ſhall take away his Dominion, to conſume, and to deſtroy it to the End.* v. 27. *And the Kingdom, and the Dominion, and the Greatneſs of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven ſhall be given to the People of the Saints of the moſt High.* Generally all Expoſitors are forced to own the Scope of this Place reſpects the *Papal Kingdom*, and cannot be meant of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, or of *Mahomet*, at leaſt *intirely* and *primarly*.

2. The Fall of *Rome* ſeems plainly foretold by the Apoſtle, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 3, 4. we have that *Man of Sin* graphically pointed out to us, ſo that none doubts *that Man of Sin ſhall be revealed, the Son of Perdition, who oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf above all*

that

that is called God, or that is worſhipped: So that he, as God, ſitteth in the Temple of God, ſhewing himſelf that he is God. And after we have as plain an Account of his Fall, *v.* 8. *Whom the Lord ſhall conſume with the Spirit of his Mouth, and ſhall deſtroy with the Brightneſs of his Coming.* The Evidence of this plain Text has conſtrained ſome of the *Pope's* Communion to own, this ſeems to point at the *Papal Power*, and to foretell his Downfall. Many other Reaſons are adduced we wave at the Time, and proceed to the

Laſt Thing I propoſed, to enquire how theſe great Powers will fall. I own a little Patience would bring us to it in the Threed of the Prophecy; but while the Text ſpeaks of their Deſtruction, the next Thought, after the Certainty thereof, is, How they ſhall be brought down? And there is ſtill the more Reaſon to ſtate this Enquiry, that theſe two did not riſe after the ſame Manner, and it is thought very reaſonable to think they will not fall by the ſame Means. This will oblige us to ſpeak a Word of the Fall of each of them.

1. For *Mahomet*, it is certain he roſe intirely by the *Sword*, and his Dominion was founded in Blood, and ſo will fall the ſame Way. I offer but one plain Scripture-Prophecy of this, which a great many think can have no Senſe, if it reſpect not the Fall of *Mahomet*, Ezek. xxxix. 8,----12. *Behold, it is come, it is done, ſaith the Lord God, this is the Day whereof I have ſpoken. They that dwell in the Cities of* Iſrael *ſhall go forth, and ſhall ſet on Fire and burn the Weapons, both the Shields and the Bucklers, the Bows and the Arrows, and the Hand-ſtaves and the Spears, and they ſhall burn them with Fire ſeven Years. -----And they ſhall ſpoil thoſe that ſpoiled them, and rob thoſe that robbed them. I will give unto* Gog *a Place there of Graves in* Iſrael, *the Valley of the Paſſengers on the Eaſt-ſea: And it ſhall ſtop the Noſes of the Paſſengers, and there ſhall they bury* Gog, *and all his Multitude, and they ſhall call it, The Valley of* Hamon-gog. If this reſpect the *Mahometan Deluſion*, as many incline to think, then we ſee the Manner of their Fall; yea, and we have alſo pointed out to us the Inſtruments of their Ruin: It will be brought about by *Chriſtians*, as is plain from theſe Words of the Prophecy, *They ſhall ſpoil thoſe that ſpoiled them*, &c.

2. As for the *Papal Monarchy*, it appears from Scripture it will not fall altogether the ſame Way. It is commonly thought, eſpecially by the moſt penetrating Expoſitors, that the Prophet *Daniel* has an Eye to the *Pope*, Dan. viii. 25. where he ſpeaks of a *Politick King*, who, *through his Policy, ſhould cauſe Craft to proſper in his Hand, and to magnify himſelf in his Heart*: And adds in that ſame Verſe, *But he ſhall be broken without Hands.* Should we underſtand this of *Antiochus*, as a great many incline to do, yet it is alſo owned he was a Type of *Antichriſt*; tho', from what was ſaid above, it ſeems moſt probably to be thought, the *Spirit of God* had no View of that wicked Perſon at all. The great *Luther* ſays, *As he roſe without Hands, ſo he ſhall fall without Hands.* Nor is the Apoſtle's Word croſs this, from which he makes the Obſerve, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 8. *The Lord will conſume him with the Spirit of his Mouth, and deſtroy him with the Brightneſs of his Coming.* I am unwilling to underſtand this laſt Clauſe of the Day of Judgment; for *the Brightneſs of Chriſt's Coming* might reſpect that glorious State of the Church we expect upon the Fall of *Babylon.* Some indeed tell us, We are to underſtand this Deſtruction of *Rome* to be by ſome notable Stroke from God immediately, as happened to *Herod*, Acts xii. 23. *An Angel of the Lord ſmote him.* But the moſt, by this, underſtand the Preaching of the Goſpel, becauſe the Word of God is called a *Sword*, as we have heard before. I own I ſee not how this can be excluded, which we have proved to be ſo effectual againſt his Enemies already; and there is Reaſon to believe it will be more ſo, when *he takes to him his great Power, and reigns*: Yet I muſt own, it were as hard to confine the Fall of *Antichriſtian Rome* intirely to the Preaching of the Goſpel; eſpecially, that in this ſame Prophecy we find it threatned, *Chriſt* would *come and fight againſt his Church's Enemies with the Sword of his Mouth.* Beſides, we find ſome other Engines will be imployed againſt her; for it is ſaid, *Rev.* xvi. 6. *They have ſhed the Blood of the Saints and Prophets, and thou haſt given them Blood to drink.* And again, *Rev.* xvii. 16. *They ſhall hate the Whore, and burn her Fleſh with Fire.* Whence it is plain, an external Force will alſo be imployed againſt her, in order to bring her down.

19 And the Temple of God was opened in Heaven, and there was ſeen in his Temple, the Ark of his Teſtament: And there were Lightnings, and Voices, and Thundrings, and an Earthquake, and great Hail.

What we had before was all repreſented to the Apoſtle's *Ear*, but here we have an Emblem and Repreſentation made to his *Eye*. Altho' it is not ſaid, as in other Places, *He ſaw it*, yet it is ſaid, what is here mentioned *was ſeen*: However, I think it needs not be doubted but the Repreſentation was really made to him. And the ſame Reaſon may be given for this, we have mentioned in the Prophecies of *Ezekiel*, Chap. xl. 4. *Set thy Heart upon all that I ſhall ſhew thee; for to the Intent I might ſhew them unto thee, thou art brought hither.* No doubt *John* was ſent firſt to *Patmos*, and afterwards, either in Spirit or Body, or both, raiſed up to Heaven, on Purpoſe that he might have the Diſcoveries of all theſe Viſions; and that for the ſame End mentioned in the forecited Text, *Declare all that thou ſeeſt unto the Houſe of* Iſrael. Here we have to conſider, 1. The main or principal Viſion as manifeſted. 2. The Conſequents thereof.

I. We are to conſider the principal Viſion, conſiſting of two Parts; 1. The Opening of the Temple. 2. The Diſcovery of the Ark therein.

1. Part of the Viſion is in theſe Words, *The Temple of God was opened in Heaven.* We heard before, *Chap.* iv. 1. of a *Door* opened in Heaven; here we find the *Temple* opened, which ſeems to promiſe a further Degree of Manifeſtation, than what had been formerly. That we may, with the more Eaſe, obviate a great many jarring Thoughts of this, we ſhall take it down into Parcels, and therein conſider, 1. The Subject ſpoken of. 2. Its Condition. 3. The Place where.

(1.) The Subject ſpoken of, *The Temple of God.* We find all along, there has been a cloſs Alluſion to the *Old Teſtament Oeconomy* in the ſeveral Steps of this Prophecy; and yet none, in their Wits, can think, the Deſign of this is to reduce the World to that burdenſom Yoke of Ceremonies: But, as we ſhewed from *v.* 1. of this Chapter, to ſatisfy us that the New Teſtament is really the Accompliſhment of the Old; and to lead us to the Senſe and Meaning of theſe dark Figures, God was then pleaſed to inſtitute. The Senſe of all this I advanced above; and yet, after all, I cannot ſay that this exhauſts the whole Deſign of theſe figurative Expreſſions: I wiſh the *Gentile* Churches may not be too ſelfiſh in their Applications. Our Lord, by the Extenſion of his Mercy, has taught us to extend our Charity, not to the Followers of *Antichriſt*, ſo long as they keep that Courſe, but to that *ancient, beloved* and *covenanted* People. Can we be ſo cruel, as afflict theſe whom God has ſmitten? Dare any ſay, God has concluded them for ever under a State of Wrath and Impenitency? I own, I find none ſay this directly: But, I muſt beg Pardon to ſay, theſe who doubt, and eſpecially ſuch as deny the Reduction of the *Jews*, go pretty far this Way. I could offer not a few mollifying Thoughts concerning them, which might be ſpun out to great Length: Can we believe God would bind down that *People* to the Obſervation of theſe Laws, which an inſpired *Writer* calls a *Yoke neither we, nor our Fathers, were able to bear*; and yet deny their Poſterity Acceſs to the Truths of what is couched up under theſe Figures; and theſe poor Souls, and all that ever ſhould come of them, be ternally ſecluded from Mercy; and, in the mean Time, be ſo prodigal of the Grace of God to the moſt graceleſs Brood that ever the Sun ſhin'd on? I am not to recede from the former Senſe of *Temple*; for, I am confident, what was advanced is agreeable to the Word of God: But I would have here, under this ſeventh Trumpet, an auxiliary Thought admitted in Favours of the *Jews*, and it is for this, The *Holy Ghoſt* was pleaſed to retain theſe Old Teſtament Terms, for this in a ſpecial Manner, to ſatisfy the *Jews* at laſt, that all the Intendments of theſe Figures are to be found in Chriſt and his Goſpel, and ſo to lead them from the *Type* to the *Truth*. Now, while we have ſimply mentioned the *Temple*, we are to take it as comprehending all the three Parts mentioned in *v.* 1. and ſo it will have in it the *Service*, the *Office-bearers*, and the *Worſhippers in the ſpiritual Temple of God*, founded on Chriſt Jeſus; this, I know, none will refuſe: But the great Struggle here is, If this Expreſſion, *The Temple of God*, does at no Time comprehend any other Thing in its Notion? I am ready to believe it does; and eſpecially in this Place, tho' I ſhall not refuſe it to other Places either: For theſe who make this an Emblem of the *triumphant* State of the Church, I need not dwell further on their Opinion, having before proven this *Trumpet* is in no Senſe to be meant of the End of the World, and conſequently this cannot repreſent the State of the Saints above. And, if by the *Temple of God* we underſtand the *Church of God*, and by *Heaven* the *Church of God*, then it will follow, the Church of God was ſeen in the Church of God, which is a mere Tautology: Yet I find many guilty of it. There is indeed leſs to be ſaid of them who mean nothing at all by Heaven, but the Theatre of Viſion; yet this we ſhall a little afterwards examine, and ſhew, that ſometimes Heaven is an Emblem of the Church. By the *Temple of God*, then, I think, we are to underſtand the *Militant Church*, and here with a particular View to the *Jews*, who ſhall be brought to *acknowledge*

knowledge the Lord to be their God, and David [*i. e.* Chriſt the Son of *David*] *to be their King.* And ſo here we have the moſt perfect State of the Church upon Earth, when, with the *Fulneſs of the Nations*, there will be a *National Converſion of the* Jews. This may in the fulleſt Senſe be called the *Temple of God.*

(2.) The Condition of this Temple, *opened.* This, to be ſure, ſuppoſes, that the Temple was *ſhut* before, at leaſt comparatively; and that then, under the *ſeventh Trumpet*, it ſhall be more open than ever it was before. We read, that ſometimes the Doors of the Temple were ſhut under the Reigns of *idolatrous Kings*; and that, when it pleaſed God to raiſe up a religious King, he cauſed the *Doors* of the Sanctuary to be *opened*, in order to *Reparation*, and then for the *Worſhip of God*; as we ſee under the good Government of *Hezekiah*, 2 Chron. xxix. 3. But this cannot be the Caſe here; for the Temple was deſtroyed before this Viſion, and is never to be rebuilt again: Nor can this be underſtood of the State of the Goſpel-church, for that cannot be ſaid to be ſhut, ſeeing the Witneſſes continued to give their Teſtimony all the 1260 Days, and were only ſilent three Days and an Half; for the Reſurrection of theſe Witneſſes did preceed this a very long Time, even all the Space of the ſix Trumpets; and at the Beginning of the Sounding of this ſeventh, all the Kingdoms of this World became the Kingdoms of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*: So that this muſt of Neceſſity ſignify ſome Manifeſtation upon the Back of that, not diſcovered. And therefore, by Opening here, I think, we are to underſtand the Manifeſtation of the Deſign and Signification of the Temple, and Temple-Service to the *Jews* (for the *Gentiles* were brought in before) who to this Day are ſo wedded, even unto Bigotry, unto their old and outdated Ordinances; as the Apoſtle tells us, 2 *Cor.* iii. 15. *There is a Vail upon their Hearts unto this Day, when* Moſes *is read*, i. e They know not the Import and deſign'd Signification of their own Worſhip: And therefore, we may conclude, the Temple is ſhut to this Day, at leaſt to the Generality of the *Jews*. But, we are ſure, it ſhall not continue always ſo; for it is added, *v. 16. When it* [i. e. the Heart of *Iſrael*] *ſhall turn unto the Lord, the Vail ſhall be taken away*; i. e. they then ſhall exactly know the Meaning of all that ceremonial Service. Which I take to be the Senſe of Opening here.

(3.) The Place where this Diſcovery was made, *in Heaven.* I am of the Mind, as I have ſaid before, the Valley or Theatre of Viſion is meant here, where *John* had all ſince the Beginning of *Chap.* 4. But, it is as true, that Theatre, with what he ſaw in it, *Chap.* iv. and v. is deſigned to be an Emblem of the Church of God, the Field where the moſt of theſe Prophecies, and in a particular Manner this, will be accompliſhed: And ſo the Senſe and Meaning is, the *Jewiſh* Nation will at that Time ſee in the *Chriſtian Church*, the Soul and Life of all that was typical in their Worſhip. If it be ſaid, They might have diſcovered that many Hundreds of Years before the *Sound of the ſeventh Trumpet*: Nor can we expect any Thing elſe will caſt up in the Church, which has not been ſince the Beginning of Chriſtianity; and therefore this muſt ſignify the Diſcovery of ſomething (at leaſt for ſome Time) unknown before. I anſwer, 1. In the Apoſtle's Days the *manifold Wiſdom of God did appear*, not only to Men, but alſo to *Angels, by the Church*: But yet that Diſcovery was but partial as to Men, and very much ſo to the *Jews*, there being but a ſmall Handful (compared to the Bulk of that Nation) converted; but at that Time the Vail will be taken off their Hearts, and then will the Bulk of that Nation be turned to the Lord. 2. That which now, by the Permiſſion of God, may obſtruct their clear diſcerning of the Truth of what was typified by the Temple and Service thereof, is the flouriſhing Condition of *Popery* and *Mahometaniſm*, both of them more unreaſonable than their own Worſhip (as lame as it is) at this Day: But theſe being taken out of the Way, and a general Reformation obtaining through the World, they will have a clearer View, than now it is poſſible for them to have. 3. We may add, that the promiſed *Spirit of Liberty*, 2 Cor. iii. 17. will be poured out upon them, and then will they get Hearts to underſtand and conſider this Diſcovery.

2. The other Part of the Viſion we have in theſe Words, *There was ſeen in his Temple the Ark of his Teſtament.* Here is an extraordinary Diſcovery, and which was never ſeen before; for, by the ſpecial Command of God, the *Ark* was concealed from the Eyes of all the People, yea, and the ordinary Prieſts too: As we ſee in the Law, *Numb.* iv. 5. Aaron *and his Sons were to take down the Covering-vail, and cover the Ark of the Teſtimony with it.* And we find a dreadful Plague upon the *Men of* Bethſhemeſh, 1 Sam. vi. 19. *becauſe they looked into the Ark, when* 50070 *of them were deſtroyed.* For none might enter into the moſt holy Place, but only the High Prieſt: and when he went by the Command of God, the Matter was ſo ordered, that he could not ſee it, becauſe of a Cloud of Smoke ariſing from the Incenſe, *Lev.* xvi. 13. *And he ſhall put the Incenſe upon the Fire before the Lord, that the Cloud of*

the Incenſe may cover the Mercy-ſeat, that is upon the Teſtimony, that he die not. So that this is ſuch a Diſcovery as the *Jews* never had before; and conſequently the Opening of the Temple, in the former Part of the Viſion, muſt be extraordinary too: At leaſt both of them will infer ſomething the *Jews* were intirely Strangers to. Yet, after this general View, ſomething ſeems to require a further Conſideration, which we ſhall reduce to theſe Heads, 1. The Subject. 2. Its Condition. 3. The Place where.

(1.) The Subject, *The Ark of his Teſtament*; or, as ſome render it, *The Ark of the Covenant.* This was placed in the moſt holy Part of the Sanctuary, *Exod.* xxvi. 33, 34. *And thou ſhalt hang up the Vail under the Taches, that thou mayſt bring in thither, within the Vail, the Ark of the Teſtimony; and the Vail ſhall divide unto you the holy Place, and the moſt holy, and thou ſhalt put the Mercy-ſeat upon the Ark of the Teſtimony.* This *Ark* was a little Chiſt of the Length of four Foot and an Half, and the Breadth of two Foot and three Inches; In which was put the *Tables of Stone on which God had wrote the Law*: And therefore it was called *The Ark of Teſtimony*, Exod. xxv. 17. 1 King viii. 9. The Cover of which Ark was the *Mercy-ſeat*, on which was planted *the two Cherubims.* Which Ark was a notable Type of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who fulfilled all Righteouſneſs, and thereby ſecured Mercy to all that believe. Here then the great Myſtery of the *Jewiſh* Religion was known at the Time it prevailed to but a very few of its Profeſſors in its Import and Signification; As appears from their unaccountable Curioſity to peep into the Ark, which proved fatal to a very great Number.

(2.) The Condition of this Ark, it *was ſeen*, i. e. diſcovered. This was never done before, for only the High Prieſt could enter where it was, and that only once a Year; but when the ſeventh Trumpet ſhall ſound, then all that is and was wrapt up in that Myſtery, will be obvious to the whole Nation of the *Jews*; which, in plain Terms, ſignifies that they ſhall all (at leaſt the far greater Part of them) be bleſt with the ſaving Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt.

(3.) The Place of this Diſcovery, *In his Temple*; i. e. the Temple of God, of which we heard above: Then all the Myſteries of the Ceremonial Law will be laid open before the whole World, and eſpecially the poor blinded *Jews*; for God will then make the Chriſtian Church a Mirror, in it all ſhall be both ſeen and felt. I own, I am much taken with this Notion, and think from this Verſe we have ſufficient Ground to hope for the Converſion of God's ancient People; or, if there ſhould be a Miſtake in the Thing, I hope it will be pardonable from what follows; or, if that ſhould not conclude, yet an eager Deſire of what Scripture gives ſo clear a Ground for, may plead Excuſe: Tho', after all, I believe there is Ground for more than a fond Thought.

II. The Conſequents of this Viſion, *There were Lightnings, and Voices, and Thundrings, and an Earthquake, and great Hail.* Theſe Things are very *auguſt*, in Number *five*, and point at the Solemnity of this glorious Manifeſtation: For all theſe were in a moſt ſenſible Manner at the Promulgation of their Law; and now, when the *Jews* are to be let in to the Truth of theſe Types, we are not to think it will be leſs notable. Some talk at a great Rate of the Converſion of the *Jews*, and think they have Ground from the Apoſtle *Paul* for ſo doing, when, in ſome Parts of his Writings, he ſpeaks of himſelf as a Pattern and Enſample of the After-calling of the *Jews*; and ſo ground their particular Thoughts this Way, upon the Manner of the Apoſtle's Converſion. Tho' the Thing be curious, one might wiſh for more Satisfaction than can be had from theſe dry Notions. As for the Particulars here named, we have had them before, and advanced all that with Aſſurance we could: Nor have I heard ſince of any Thing worth the While to ſtay a Reader. The Places where theſe Words occurred, are *Chap.* iv. 5. and *Chap.* viii. 5, 7.

But that this Paſſage leads us to think directly of the Converſion of the *Jews*, which indeed I take to be the Scope of the Words, it would appear at leaſt not unreaſonable, we handle this Point a little cloſly, which we ſhall endeavour with all imaginable Brevity: And, in order thereto, ſtudy to ſpeak to theſe three Generals; 1. Prove the Truth of the *Jews* National Reduction. 2. Enquire how it will be brought about. 3. Modeſtly touch at the Time of this great Event.

1. I am to eſtabliſh from Scripture, a general or national Converſion of the *Jews*; i. e. not only of the Tribe of *Judah*, and theſe whoſe Opportunity it was to join them, but alſo of the other ten Tribes. I own, there is no ſmall Difficulty in this, eſpecially that ſo notable an One ſtares us in the Face at the Entrance; as, Where the ten Tribes are now diſperſed? I own this to be a Queſtion has employed all the Learned, who have dipt into it: Nor have they been able to produce what could ſatisfy the World, nor I believe themſelves. Some ſay, They are ſcattered through *Aſia*; Others think them to be in *Africa*; And not a few believe the Throng of them to be this Day in *America*.

All

All theſe great Men are at Pains to prove their ſeveral Opinions, partly from the Humours, Manners, and eſpecially the religious Rites found in theſe ſeveral Quarters of the World; all which, they think, conclude in their Favours. It ſeems to be a hard Matter to contradict any of them, and bring as good Reaſons againſt their Thoughts, as theſe by which theſe Gentlemen do eſtabliſh them. I ſhall then paſs all their hiſtorical Accounts, and theſe they borrow from the *Apocryphal* Writers, and not contradict any of them, but allow them all to be true, and ſubſiſt, and not a few of them in *Europe*; and then the Concluſion will be, They are diſperſed through the whole habitable World: Nor do I doubt but this will caſt up to be neareſt the Truth, from what we have to advance upon the three Heads before-mentioned. But, at the firſt Inſtance, we are to prove the Truth of a National Converſion, from theſe few ſcriptural Arguments.

(1.) The firſt I adduce is from the Prophet *Hoſea*, Chap. iii. 4, 5. *The Children of* Iſrael *ſhall be many Days without a King, and without a Prince* [originally Prieſt] *and without a Sacrifice, and without an Image, and without an Ephod and Teraphim. Afterwards ſhall the Children of* Iſrael *return and ſeek the Lord their God, and* David *their King.* We cannot pitch upon a Period of Time wherein the firſt Part of this Prophecy was compleatly verified, but after the Diſperſion by *Titus*; unleſs we refer it to the Ruin of the ten Tribes long before. This is owned by ſome, who are not very clear as to the Point of a National Converſion. And I am ſure no Man can ſhew when the ſecond Part of the Prophecy had its Accompliſhment: The Text ſays, It will be *in the latter Days*; which by all is concluded, in Scripture, to ſignify the Period of the Goſpel: And, that not having as yet fallen out, we have all the Reaſon in the World to believe it ſhall come to paſs; And this Prophecy tells us, It will be under the *ſeventh Trumpet.* It is to be noticed, this Text does not ſpeak of a few, but of a general or *National Converſion*; for it is ſaid twice, *The Children of* Iſrael, a common Deſignation of them in Bulk.

(2.) The next Proof is from the Prophet *Zechariah*, a notable Promiſe to the *Jews*, Zech. xii. 10. *I will pour out upon the Houſe of* David, *and the Inhabitants of* Jeruſalem, *the Spirit of Grace and Supplication, and they ſhall look on me whom they have pierced, and mourn for him, as One mourneth for his only Son, and as One that is in Bitterneſs for his Firſt-born,* &c. Some tell us, This was verified at *Peter's* Sermon, *Acts* ii. *when about* 3000 *Souls were converted.* It cannot be refuſed, but a partial Accompliſhment was at that Time; But, that there was nothing after that of this Prophecy to be fulfilled, I am not ſatisfied: For, whoever conſiders the Context, will find, not a few of them is intended, but their Converſion in a Family-Manner, *i. e.* in whole Tribes, and in their ſeveral Tribes; ſo that it muſt amount to a National Mourning, which has not yet fallen out, and therefore is to be expected.

(3.) Another Paſſage we have in *Luke's* Goſpel, and they are the Words of good old *Simeon*, ſpeaking, all own, by the Spirit of Prophecy; he ſays in the General, *Luke* ii. 30. *Mine Eyes have ſeen the Salvation which thou haſt prepared before the Face of all People*; i. e. Chriſt, the common Saviour of all the World: For *there is none other Name given under Heaven among Men, whereby they muſt be ſaved.* And, it being ordinary for the Spirit of God, in Scripture, to range all the World in two Claſſes; This we find done, *v.* 32. *A Light to inlighten the* Gentiles, *and the Glory of thy People* Iſrael. Which tells to whom he is ſent in particular, both to *Jew* and *Gentile.* There is alſo, in my Opinion, a Hint at the Order, the *Gentiles* firſt, and then the *Jews*: Nor can it be ſaid, This was fulfilled under the Miniſtry of Chriſt and his Apoſtles; for, 1. They did not firſt preach the Goſpel to the *Gentiles*, but began with the *Jews*; which ſays this is to be underſtood of ſome other Period than the firſt Age of Chriſtianity: And 'tis plain the other has not yet appeared, when the *Gentiles* ſhould path the Way to the *Jews.* 2. This is to fall out after the Rejection of the *Jews*, as it is ſaid, *v.* 34 *This Child is ſet for the Fall and Riſing again of many in* Iſrael. Where, 'tis beyond all Debate, this reſpects an After-time, *i. e.* after the Rejection of the *Jews*, ſome Years after our Lord's Aſcenſion; and therefore it cannot agree to the Converſion of ſome of them by the Miniſtry of the Apoſtles. Again, there ſeems plainly inſinuate a Proportion between their *Fall* and their *Riſe*: Now, it was not a few of them that fell, but *many*, ſays the Text, yea the whole Nation (a few excepted;) And conſequently the Riſe is not to be of a Few, or Part, but of the whole Nation, when they ſhall be again received into Mercy and Favour with God: This ſeems to be no contemptible Proof.

(4.) The next Paſſage we plead from, is our Lord's Words, according to the Evangeliſt *Luke*, Chap. xxi. 24. where, after he had in the plaineſt Terms foretold the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, to which the Accompliſhment did exactly correſpond, he tells, how

they ſhould be oppreſſed with this Miſery, not for ever; for tho' it was a total, it was not a final Rejection: And therefore he ſays, *Jeruſalem ſhall be troden down of the* Gentiles, *until the Times of the* Gentiles *be fulfilled.* Where we may obſerve, 1. The Correſpondence betwixt the Text, and the ſecond Verſe of the eleventh Chapter of the *Revelation*, wherein we have almoſt the ſame Words, I am ſure to the ſame Purpoſe. 2. There are mentioned Times of the *Gentiles* in the plural Number; and, I think, at leaſt two Times are to be obſerved, the Time that the *Gentiles* ſhall tread the Outer-Court and holy City under Foot, which is nothing but the 1260 Days, and then the Time of the Converſion of the *Gentiles* to Chriſt. In this Paſſage, I think, it will need no Perſpectives to ſee our Lord plainly means, that when theſe Times are fulfilled, then the *Jews* will be brought in: Nor is it to be done another Way; for, what *Times of the* Gentiles are to be meant here? To be ſure, not the ſcanty Collections made by the Apoſtles, and ſince their Time; Or, if that had been the Senſe, then *Jeruſalem* ſhould not at this Day be trode under Foot: And therefore we may ſafely conclude, the Time pointed at by our Saviour, is not come; elſe the *Jews* would be brought into that *Fold*, whereof Chriſt is the great *Shepherd.*

(5.) We might plead from that Text of the Apoſtle *Paul*, 2 Cor. iii. 14, 15, 16. *For until this Day remaineth the Vail untaken away, in the Reading of the Old Teſtament: Which Vail is done away in Chriſt. But even unto this Day, when* Moſes *is read, the Vail is upon their Heart. Nevertheleſs, when it ſhall turn unto the Lord, the Vail ſhall be taken away.* This is a very plain Text, and might be inſiſted on to the Purpoſe in Hand, but that we glanced at it before; and indeed I think it needs but little Illuſtration.

(6.) The laſt Proof I bring upon the Field, is that famous Paſſage of the Apoſtle *Paul*, Rom. xi. which is ſo very pointed, that, were there no more in the whole Scripture, might oblige us to believe the Propoſition: And it is ſo very cogent, that it has moved ſome, who plead againſt the Reduction of the *Jews*, to leave it dubious; but others, from the Conſideration thereof, have waxed very bold to aſſert this ſweet Truth, that there will be a National Converſion of the *Jews*. In this Context I would notice theſe few Things, 1. The Apoſtle oppoſes the Converſion of the *Jews* in his Time, to an after and total Reduction of them, *v.* 5. *At this preſent Time there is a Remnant, according to the Election of Grace*: Which certainly reſpects the partial Converſion of them, by his and the other Apoſtles Miniſtry. But afterwards he ſpeaks of their Fulneſs, *v.* 12. *If the Fall of them be the Riches of the World, and the Diminiſhing of them be the Riches of the* Gentiles; *How much more their Fulneſs?* Who can but grant the Difference betwixt a *Remnant* and a *Fulneſs*? And the latter is ſpoken of, as what will follow long after the former. 2. He magnifies that great Turn of Providence towards that Nation, *v.* 15. *For if the Caſting away of them be the Reconciling of the World, what ſhall the Receiving of them be, but Life from the Dead?* He had ſaid before, That *the Rejection of them was the Riches of the* Gentiles; and here the Receiving of them, *i. e. after they were diminiſhed*, will be like a Reſurrection, as the Converſion of Sinners is called, *Rev.* xxv. 5, 6. Which plainly proves, there is to follow a more full Converſion of that Nation, than happened in the Times of the Apoſtles; which is all wanted in the preſent Caſe. 3. He expreſly ſays, *v.* 26. *All* Iſrael *ſhall be ſaved*: Which, to be ſure, points at a National Converſion. I know ſome great Men, to weaken this, ſay, That by *all Iſrael*, we are to underſtand all true and faithful Members of the Chriſtian Church, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*. But they ſhould conſider, that before, *v.* 12. *Iſrael* is oppoſed to the *Gentiles*; and juſt ſo afterwards, *v.* 25. *I would not, Brethren, that ye ſhould be ignorant of this Myſtery, that Blindneſs in Part has happened to* Iſrael, *until the Fulneſs of the* Gentiles *be come in*: Which, to me, eſtabliſhes the Senſe of the Apoſtle in the whole of the Chapter; elſe I doubt if any Man ſhall give a ſenſible Interpretation thereof, and not contradict himſelf. 4. The Apoſtle, *v.* 25. calls this *a Myſtery.* Now the partial Converſion of the *Jews* in his Time was no Myſtery, all ſaw that a Remnant was turned; but to think of a National Turning, after a National Rejection, was what could have entred into no Man's Head, and therefore this is deſervedly called a Myſtery. And we have Reaſon to fear they will come under that heavy Cenſure, *to be wiſe in their own Conceit*, who think otherwiſe. 5. This is yet further clear, from the Foundation the Apoſtle lays down of this National Converſion, *v.* 28. *As touching the Election, they are beloved for the Fathers Sake.* So that it is nothing in themſelves, but the Faithfulneſs of God keeping Covenant with their Fathers, *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*; and therefore he ſays, they are beloved *for their Fathers Sake.* Here then all this is to be reſolved in the Faithfulneſs of God to his Promiſes through many Generations; which we can never draw over to the *Gentiles*, without

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doing the greateſt Violence to the ſeveral Texts that contain theſe Things: And which we ſhall not mention, on Purpoſe to ſave the Pains of the Reader, who may eaſily furniſh himſelf with Plenty of them. I hope now, I have made pretty plain the Truth of the National Converſion of the *Jews*, and I am confident we ſhall not find ſo much ſaid againſt it in the whole Word of God; and therefore I conclude, we ſhould live in the Faith of it, and pray fervently therefore.

2. The next Thing I propoſed, was, to enquire a little how this Converſion will be brought about? Some Thoughts about this are the more neceſſary, that now above ſeventeen Centuries have elapſed, and that Nation has ſtill, for the moſt Part, given a deaf Ear to all the Calls of the Goſpel: And one might wonder what ſhould move them, of a Sudden, ſo generally to give up their Hearts and their Names to Chriſt. Therefore, to make this Part alſo (at leaſt) probable, I offer theſe few Conſiderations.

(1.) This Converſion of the *Jews*, in a National Manner, will be brought about by the univerſal Spreading of the Goſpel, and in a particular Manner in theſe Places where they are now ſcattered, in whatever Corner of the World; And the flocking of the Multitude of the *Gentiles* to the Standard of Chriſt: And ſo the Apoſtle ſays, *Rom.* xi. 11. *Salvation is come to the* Gentiles, *to provoke them* [i. e. the *Jews*] *to Jealouſy*: And thereby they will be moved to turn to God, and ſubmit to *David their King*. For it is moſt preſumable, the Goſpel has reached few of theſe Places where they are; and any Notices they can have of the Truths of God, are by the *Popiſh Miſſioners*, whoſe whole Deſign is to promote the Kingdom of *Antichriſt*, and not of Chriſt. Yea, one of their Miſſioners, of more Ingenuity than the moſt, owns, That the looſe Lives of the Prieſts, ſtand in the Way of the Converſion of the poor Heathen, together with the Myſteries of their Religion, ſo choking to Reaſon and common Senſe. This *Hennipen* declares in his *American* Travels: Nor indeed can better be expected from ſuch Tools.

(2.) The *Jews* will be occular Witneſſes of God's juſt Judgments againſt *ſpiritual Babylon*, whoſe Greatneſs now may be no ſmall Obſtruction to their embracing the Truth, as was ſaid before. But that falling out, and brought about by ſuch unthought-of Methods, will no doubt fill all Spectators, and amongſt the reſt the *Jews*, with Admiration and great Aſtoniſhment; and thereby they will be brought to themſelves, and to conſider what is ſo notable, and then turn to Chriſt.

(3.) That Nation has, ſince their total Rejection, been purſued on all Hands with the higheſt Strains of Spight and Reproach, a Part of their deſerved Curſe; but when that Time comes, the Lord will wipe away their Reproach: All Nations have poured Contempt upon them, and they are to this Day a Proverb, and a Taunt; which I doubt not has ſtood in the Way of their Converſion. I wiſh too much of this did not appear among our Chriſtian Writers, both in their Works and Converſation. It were eaſy to ſhew how reproachfully they have been treated by all Nations; nor ſhall I refuſe, but their abandoned Condition, and diſſolute Way of living, have too much promoted it: Yet it is a Truth not to be reſiſted, there is not a more deſpicable People under the Sun than they are. Now, if God once turn the Minds of Men from theſe Prejudices, and, in Room thereof, plant Thoughts of Peace, Love, and Benevolence towards them, to be ſure the Fruits of theſe Things will be ſeen in the Reduction of that poor ſcattered People.

(4.) A powerful and efficacious Concurrence of the Spirit of God, with the Word of the Truth of the Goſpel, will no doubt be the great Mean; as we heard before was promiſed by the Prophet *Zechariah*. Now, when God opens a great Door and effectual, who will be able to reſiſt? And if one Sermon of the Apoſtle *Peter* converted 3000, what may be expected, when the Lord is pleaſed to march glorioufly in the Goſpel of his Son? *Satan* will then fall like *Lightning* from *Heaven*, and the *Scales* of Ignorance and Unbelief will then fall from their Eyes; then ſhall they look on him whom they pierced, and mourn; and be as ready to cry, *Hoſanna to the Son of* David, as ever their Fathers were to cry, *Crucify him*. It muſt be owned theſe are ſweet Thoughts, and ſuch as may move the Serious to wiſh theſe Things may be ſo, tho' the Grounds upon which it is built were more ſlender than they really are: But having ſuch Props for our Faith in this Matter, how ready ſhould we be to embrace it, and fervently to pray God would haſten that Time, when all the Kingdoms of the World ſhall become the Kingdoms of his Son!

3. We would a little touch at the *Time* of this great Event. This I own to be one of the moſt uncertain and dangerous Enquires in the whole Prophecy. It is moſt dangerous, becauſe, if one ſhould be too poſitive, they not only bankrupt their own Credit, but alſo caſt a Stumbling-block before others; who, while they ſee the Failures in the Supputations, are ready to call in Queſtion all other Things upon the Subject: And

therefore Expoſitors had need be wary what they advance on this Head; for indeed they have expoſed the Truths of God to the Ridicule of the World, and given a bad Impreſſion moſt unjuſtly of this Portion of holy Writ; and have moved ſome to ſay, This Book was never deſigned to be underſtood: As if there could be no underſtanding of a Prophecy, unleſs we had graphically an accurate and pointed Account of all the Periods wherein the Matters of Fact are to fall out. I own this might juſtly be expected, if the Text gave Warrant for it; and ſo all Hands might be at Work, to try their *Arithmetical* Talents. But, ſeeing all the Hints given us in this Prophecy are deſigned more for the Encouragement of the *Serious* than the Satisfaction of the *Curious*, we are to expect no ſuch Thing as a deciſive Account of any Time, further than this, That it will not be long till all the Words of this Prophecy be fulfilled, in their fulleſt Comprehenſion. Yea, and I contend it is more for the Honour of the Divine Wiſdom that it ſhould be ſo, than otherwiſe: For had the Lord been pleaſed to reveal the preciſe Time when any, much more all, the Events of this Prophecy ſhould fall out, the Church would have wanted Matter for their Prayers, for the exerciſing of their Faith, Patience, and Hope: Nay, it would be plainly to bring Heaven to the Earth; for in the Regions above, the Saints live by Sight, but here they live by Faith, which conſiſts not in a viſible Object. Beſides, there are ſo many collateral Things will come to paſs, at or about the ſame Time, ſuch as the Deſtruction of *Babylon*, the Converſion of the *Gentiles*, and the *Sabbatical* Age of the Church, all which ſeem to fall in much about a Time with the National Converſion of the *Jews*; and ſo to be peremptory about one of them, if an Eſcape be committed there, it renders all the reſt uncertain.

I have ſaid ſo much about the Danger of a deciſive Way of Writing, as is ſufficient to deter (at leaſt myſelf) from any ſuch Undertaking: And if I can make it good, that it is as uncertain as pernicious, then I imagine we cannot be blamed to leave theſe Matters, as we find them, in the Dark. Now, to inſtruct the Uncertainty of theſe Periods, I offer theſe few Conſiderations;

(1.) The fruitleſs Attempts of all that hitherto have eſſayed this hard Piece of Work. May it not be asked, Who of them have not miſcarried? And ſome of them, ſo fond of their own Thoughts, have created no ſmall Trouble to the World, while they uſed the Weight of their Reputation, to eſtabliſh their Conjectures among the unthinking Part of the World. Nor do I ſee any Thing can excuſe their Forwardneſs, but their hearty Deſire that it might be ſo; yet ſtill this makes it rather the Matter of their Prayers, than gives any ſolid Ground to propheſy: And ſome of theſe Gentlemen have been ſo unhappy, as live to ſee themſelves miſtaken, and left to pitiful Shifts for their own Exoneration. This, it is true, has betrayed others to run as far a-croſs the other Way; and to tell us plainly, There is no Time in this Prophecy, nay, nor in the whole Scripture, to be taken definitely; but when we meet with a great Number, underſtand it of a large Space of Time; and when we hear of a ſmall one, to take it for a ſhort Time: The Injuſtice of this we had Opportunity to view before. Nor do I ſee but this Method is every whit as prejudicial to the Church as the other: As the aſſuming Boldneſs of the one diſcourages when the Period elapſes, ſo the Diffidence of the other puts the World in Suſpence, and does much obſtruct the Comfort of the People of God.

(2.) The Uncertainty of all our *Chronological* Meaſures of Times, makes it next to an Impoſſibility, if it be not quite ſo, to determine Periods. This is a large Field, and many have, to little Purpoſe, traverſed it; nor have any of them gone the ſame Way, unleſs they copied after another. The Leaders in this fruitleſs Study have, from the Beginning thereof, been ſcratching others Faces, and the lateſt always unmercifully laſh them that went before them. The Years and Months are not the ſame in all Nations, nor have they been the ſame in all Ages; and we know that the Addition or Subſtraction of a few Days in a Year, in a Thouſand or Two, make a very great Variation; ſo that it is not poſſible to determine a common Standart, and much more to clear Matters of Prophecy ſo long before their Accompliſhment. The only Rule to be regarded is taken from the *Scriptures*; and yet, even here, God did not ſee it meet to carry on any particular *Æra*, but ſhifted, according to the extraordinary Steps of his Providence: As if he had deſigned to carry the Children of Men off from this unprofitable Study, which he might eaſily have prevented, had he ſeen it neceſſary, and not left the *Jews* to wrangle about their Intercalations; whoſe Example in this was followed by other Nations, who indeed did outdo them therein, as *Prideaux* has proven. Yea, and a learned Chronologiſt owns, There is no *Æra* now in the World, that became ſo, till ſome Centuries after it was over. And this *Scaliger* expreſly aſſerts, with reſpect to our Chriſtian *Æra*; which has bred no ſmall Heats amongſt the Curious.

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(3.) The Uncertainty of proping a Time, will caſt up from the Prophecy itſelf; where, as far as I can ſee, we have but one Meaſure of Time, and that applied to two different Events, that did not run parallel to other. The Dimenſion is 1260, this is given as the Time of the Church's Affliction; the ſame Meaſure is applied to the Papal Kingdom: The firſt of theſe we have in this Chapter, the other in the thirteenth. Now, we are ſure the Church's Sackcloth-condition began ſome Hundreds of Years before Popery was in the World, and yet the Papacy is to laſt 1260 Years alſo; whence it is evident, the *Pope* was to ſubſiſt ſome Hundreds of Years after the Church put off her Sackcloth: This I take to be the naked and plain Senſe of the Prophecy. Others, to remove this Difficulty, tell us, *Antichriſt* exiſted before *Popery*. This I can heartily yield: But then it will follow, there is another *Antichriſt* than the *Pope*, which they will not allow. Now, there ate three very great Uncertainties here, 1. When the Time of the Church's Sackcloth-ſtate begun. I confeſs this is the leaſt puzling of them; for it would appear, we are to date it either from the firſt Perſecution, or immediately after theſe Viſions, and then it will bring the End of that Period down to the thirteenth or fourteenth Century: Yet, even here, it is evident there is near a hundred Years Uncertainty; which, in my Judgment, will mar a deciſive ſtating of the Period. 2. The next Uncertainty is yet greater, when the Pope aroſe. The Learned here differ from other more than 300 Years; nor do I hope they ſhall be of one Mind ſo long as *Babylon* ſtands, then indeed the Church will certainly reconcile as to theſe Points. And the Uncertainty is heightned here, becauſe it is not ſaid whether the Pope's 1260 Years ſhould commence from his *riſing out of the Sea*, or from the getting Poſſeſſion of the *Dragon*'s Throne, or finally from the *Healing of his deadly Wound*. If the Spirit of God had ſeen it meet and neceſſary for the Church, to be ſure in the Prophecy he could have obviate all theſe Difficulties; and ſeeing he has not done it, it appears bold in any to intrude into Things not ſeen. 3. It is yet as uncertain how long Time will be conſumed in pouring out the ſeven Vials. It is pretty plain they will not be poured out all at once; but whether each of them is to occupy an exact and equal Number of Years, or if ſome of them will imploy mo than others, we have no Light from this Prophecy, nor indeed from any other Place of Scripture, ſo far as my Acquaintance goes. From the whole then, I think it very certain theſe labour under the greateſt Uncertainty, who would gull the World with patcht-up Periods; which is rather a bringing down the Scripture to our own Schemes, than a regulating our Thoughts by the *Word of God*.

But here it may be ſaid, A good Part of the Comfort of this Doctrine is loſt, by making the Time of the *Jews* Reduction ſo uncertain; and can we have no Meiths of it at all from Scripture? I anſwer, I humbly think no Part of the Comfort is loſt, becauſe we have not a diſtinct Diſcovery of the preciſe Time: For, if we ſhould reaſon thus, What became of all the Worthies under the Old Teſtament, who lived and died in the Faith of the Redeemer to come, and yet till *Daniel*'s Time they never had the preciſe Time condeſcended on? and even then ſo darkly, that few or none of them did take it up: Yet now it is very plain to us, that *Daniel* was bleſſed with a very expreſs Diſcovery of the Time. However this did not break the Joy and Satisfaction of the Saints, who ſaw *Chriſt's Day afar off, and did rejoice*; for to be ſure it was the Thing, and not the Time of it, made them glad: Nevertheleſs we have ſomething from this Prophecy concerning the Time in general, beyond which I think we ſhould not ſearch; As the Reduction of the *Jews* will fall out under the ſeventh Trumpet, and after the Call of the Goſpel is made effectual to the Nations, for by them will God provoke the *Jews*: And as in the partial Converſion of the *Gentiles*, the Goſpel came from the *Jews* to them, at the general Turning of the *Nations* the *Jews* will be kindly requit by the *Gentiles*. And finally, when the Lord puts forth his Hand, and pulls down the Man of Sin. It is true, all Things conſidered, it would appear all theſe notable Events are not far off; and no doubt they are daily ripening thereto, but more with Certainty cannot be ſaid.

There is one other curious Queſtion about the *Jews*, taken Notice of by the Learned, *viz.* Whether they will again be repoſſeſt of their old Habitation? I find a great many, and not without probable Grounds, incline to think they ſhall; and that *Jeruſalem* ſhall be rebuilt, and made more glorious than ever it was. It would appear no Article of Faith can ſuffer by this, whether it be reſolved in the Affirmative or in the Negative; yet I chooſe rather to join theſe who take the Negative, and do think they will never be eſtabliſhed in the Land of *Canaan* in a National Capacity, tho' ſome of them may be there as well as in other Parts of the Earth: And I offer theſe Grounds of my Thoughts.

(1.) The Lord ſeemed to have choſen that rich Spot of the Earth for his Ancient People, becauſe it was capable to ſuſtain a great Number in ſmall Bounds, which was adapted to that Oeconomy he deſigned for them: For there was to be but one Place of ſolemn Worſhip; and ſo we ſee the whole Polity of the *Jewiſh* Nation reſpected *Jeruſalem*, called the *City of their Solemnities.* And now, that that Scheme of Government can never obtain again, we are under no Neceſſity to believe they will be brought back thither.

(2.) The Confuſions have been amongſt their Tribes for above theſe 2000 Years, have made them forget, not their Tribes only, but alſo their Relation to the Patriarchs. Nor have we one Word of a Promiſe they ſhall again come to the Knowledge of theſe; for now they are ſwallowed up in the ſeveral Parts of the Earth, and incorporated amongſt them, ſo that they cannot return pure and unmixed.

(3.) The Land of *Canaan* was only a Type, firſt of the glorious State of the Church which will begin with the Sound of the ſeventh Trumpet, and then of Heaven. Now, that the Truth is come, there will be no Occaſion for the Type: Nay, it would appear reaſonable to believe, the Shadows of theſe good Things ſhall be no more remembred.

(4.) At this Period of the Church, all Mark or Badge of Diſtinction will ceaſe; for there will be neither *Jew* nor *Greek*, but they will be all one in Chriſt.

(5.) The whole Earth will then be a Land of *Canaan*; for the Curſe that Sin brought upon the Earth will be removed, and the World will get a new Face: And therefore *Peter* ſays, *There will be a new Heaven and a new Earth, wherein Righteouſneſs ſhall dwell.*

CHAP. XII.

HERE we have a manifeſt Interruption of the Threed of the Prophecy, for at leaſt three Chapters: I ſay not it is a new Subject, but a new Way of repreſenting at large, what we had before more curtly. Nor do I find myſelf under any Neceſſity to account for this Variation; for I am of the Mind it is a Duty incumbent on Man, to follow as the Lord leads, without asking Queſtions. Yet it were no hard Matter to account for this Interruption, from the Shortneſs of the firſt Recital, which being carried on to the Sabbatical State of the Church, we may allow the Spirit to explain the Parts thereof at more Leiſure; which I take to be the Import of this, and the two following Chapters.

I do think, as I ſaid before, *Chap.* iv. 1. this might in all Reaſon be reckoned the Beginning of a new Viſion, becauſe it begins with what is repreſented *Chap.* vi. 2. Yet, becauſe we find no Variation of the Theatre, we chooſe to wrap it up in the former.

I take this Chapter to be an Illuſtration of the two firſt Seals, and the Continuation of the War betwixt the Church and her firſt Enemy: And therein I notice theſe few Parts, 1. The Church by a new Emblem, and *Heatheniſm* repreſented after a new Way, to *v.* 4. 2. The State and Condition of theſe Parties, to *v.* 7. 3. There is the Engagement betwixt the two, to *v.* 9. 4. The Iſſue of this Bickering, to *v.* 10. 5. The Church's triumphant Song, to *v.* 13. 6. The Condition of both Parties upon the Back of this Engagement, to the Cloſe of the Chapter.

1 AND there appeared a great Wonder in Heaven, a Woman clothed with the Sun, and the Moon under her Feet, and upon her Head a Crown of twelve Stars.

2 And ſhe being with Child, cried, travailing in Birth, and pained to be delivered.

3 And there appeared another Wonder in Heaven, and behold, a great red Dragon, having ſeven Heads and ten Horns, and ſeven Crowns upon his Heads.

Here I think we have the firſt and ſecond Seals illuſtrate by new Emblems. It is no new Thing in Scripture to repreſent the ſame Thing by different Emblems, as we find the Caſe of *Pharaoh*'s Dreams, and otherwiſe, even often in this ſame Prophecy.

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Here then we are to notice, 1. A new Emblem of the firſt Seal. 2. A new Emblem of the ſecond Seal. The one *v.* 1, 2. the other *v.* 3.

I. There is a new Emblem of the Church, that takes the Field firſt; where we are to view, 1. The Emblem. 2. The Manner how it appeared. 3. The State and Condition thereof.

1. There is the Emblem of the Church, *v.* 1. Where we are to notice, 1. Her general and emblematical Character. 2. The Place where ſhe appeared.

(1.) There is the general Character of the Church, under a new Emblem, *A great Wonder*, σημεῖον. This ſometimes ſignifies a *Miracle*; and ſo it is uſed in Scripture, *John* ii. 11. *This Beginning of Miracles did Jeſus.* It is however plain, the common Uſe of the Word gives it another Signification, *i. e.* a *Sign*, or an *Emblem*, or a *Mark*, Gen. i. 14. *Let them be for Signs.* No Doubt, wherever we find it, it ſignifies ſome ſtrange and unwonted Diſcovery. And I take it here to ſignify ſome viſible Repreſentation, as it is ſaid of our Lord, *Luke* ii. 34. *He ſhall be for a Sign that ſhall be ſpoken againſt.* And here this Sign is called a *great* Sign, which employed all the Prophet's Obſervation. We find a Sign properly ſignifies a Repreſentation, *Rom.* iv. 11. *He received the Sign of Circumciſion.* Here then, this to be meant of a Figure or Emblem.

(2.) The Place where this Sign appeared, in *Heaven*; this was the Theatre of Viſion, *Chap.* iv. 1. Nor can we make any Thing more of it now: For, to make the *Woman* an Emblem of the *Church*, and *Heaven* the ſame, is to make an Emblem within an Emblem, which we cannot do without the beſt of Authority.

2. The Manner how this Sign appeared, under the Notion of a *Woman.* This ſome of the *Papiſts* and ſome Proteſtants take for the Virgin *Mary*, which I take to be a Thought not worth the refuting: The common, and I imagine the beſt Notion about it is, we thereby underſtand the Church, which we have frequently deſigned under this Emblem; as the Church of the *Gentiles*, Iſa. liv. 1. *Sing, O Barren.* The Church of the *Jews* alſo goes under the ſame Character, *Ezek.* xvi. 8. Particular Churches are ſo deſigned, 2 *Cor.* xi. 2. *I have eſpouſed you to one Husband.* And the Church univerſal comes often under this Figure in the *Song*. But this is a Matter agreed on all Hands, and we need be at little Pains to enquire what Church this is to be meant of: For the *Jewiſh* Church was repudiate long before this Viſion; And, to take it for the *Jewiſh* or *Gentile* Converts, they are both too narrow: So that it muſt be extended to the whole militant Church, yet ſo as ſtill we have a ſpecial Eye to the *primitive* Church, which, to be ſure, was the *Seed* of all *Chriſtians* ſince that Time. But that which we are to notice, is, why the Church is repreſented by the Emblem of a *Woman*, or *Wife*, as the Word ſignifies; and we offer theſe few Grounds of Analagy, 1. As it is with the *Woman*, ſo it is with the Church, ſhe is the weaker Veſſel, more liable to Injuries, and leſs able to defend herſelf. 2. To ſhew her *Unity* and *Unanimity* as to theſe Things that conſtitute a Church: For, tho' there be Bickerings amongſt particular Chriſtians and their Setts about Matters of leſſer Moment, yet does not that break their Harmony as to Matters abſolutely neceſſary; for it is as poſſible to get all Mens Faces of the ſame Features, as that every Man ſhould have the ſame Thought in all Things; it is ſufficient they unite in what makes for the Power of Godlineſs 3. To ſhew her *Subjection* to, and Dependence on Chriſt her Husband; which is, as the greateſt *Duty*, ſo the greateſt *Beauty* of the true Church: It is the black Mark of *Antichriſt*, that he uſurps that Juriſdiction over the Church, which is the ſole Prerogative of Chriſt, and to lord it over the Conſciences of God's People. 4. To ſhew the *unfeigned Love* the Church ſhould cheriſh towards her only Lord; for the Love of a Wife to a Husband is given as the higheſt Peg of Love, and to exceed that in Scripture is *hyperbolick*. *David* ſaid of *Jonathan*, *His Love was above the Love of Women*, originally *Wives*; becauſe no Love could be greater than his. 5. To ſhew the deliberate and *undiſſoluble Engagement* of the Church to Chriſt, and of Chriſt to her; this is called the Marriage-covenant; and, as Marriage makes Man and Woman one Fleſh, ſo the Union of the Church to Chriſt *makes her one Spirit with him.* 6. To point out her *Fruitfulneſs* by the Seed of God, which is his Word; ſhe brings forth many Children, and all of them like God in *Holineſs*; and ſo ſhe is called, *Jeruſalem above, the Mother of us all.*

But we have ſomething further to notice about this Woman, or Wife, *viz.* the Trappings and Ornaments, which are moſt ſurpriſing. We indeed find, that the *Ornaments* of a *Bride* are, for uſual, very *extraordinary*; but, in this Caſe, we ſhall find no Parallel: And therefore we would be at ſome Pains to conſider her from Head to Foot, in theſe three Steps, 1. Her general, or moſt adorning Garment. 2. The Ornament of, or under her Feet. 3. The Ornament of her Head.

(1.) Her *Garment*, which, when diſtinguiſhed from the Head and Feet, muſt comprehend all betwixt them; in the Text, it is ſaid, *She was clothed with the Sun.* All

know this to be the moſt glorious Part of the viſible Creation, and in a prophetick Strain muſt ſignify ſomething in the ſpiritual World which bears Proportion thereto; and this can be nothing leſs, or elſe, than *Jeſus Chriſt the true Sun of Righteouſneſs*, Mal. iv. 2. and points eſpecially at his Divine Influences, which we find ſhadowed forth by the ſame Emblem, *Pſal.* lxxxiv. 11. *The Lord will be a Sun and Shield, the Lord will give Grace and Glory.* This then is a Figure of the *Direction* and *Protection* that the Church hath from Chriſt. That ſhe is ſaid to be *clothed* with him, is very agreeable to the Scripture-Stile, *Rom.* xiii. 14. *Put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; which is to be meant of his *imputed Righteouſneſs*, and of the Garment of Holineſs wrought in our Hearts and Lives by the Spirit. Theſe who are thus clothed, will anſwer that Direction, *Mat.* v. 16. *Let your Light ſo ſhine before Men, that they may ſee your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.*

(2.) There is the Poſture or Ornament of her Feet, *And the Moon under her Feet.* What we are to mean by the Moon, is not ſo clear, and Expoſitors differ much: To paſs ſeverals, I only mention two; 1. Some, by *Moon*, underſtand the outdated *Moſaick* Law and Worſhip, which was much ordered by the *Moon.* 2. Others thereby mean the *World*, and Things of it, which the Church has under her Feet, *i. e.* deſpiſes them. This is the Opinion moſt followed, but I ſee no Reaſon from Scripture to ſupport the Conceit; tho' the Senſe be given to true in itſelf, yet that will not make it therefore the Scope of this Place. Here it is brought in as an Ornament to the Church, and would ſeem to point at *ſomething leſs glorious* than the *Sun*, and yet more glorious than the *Stars.* And that it is ſaid to be *under her Feet*, muſt point at her *Paths*; and ſo it muſt denote the Practice of the Church, which ſhe derived from the *Spirit*, and *Example* of Chriſt; and therefore was *beautiful as the Moon*, and gives Light to them that ſit in Darkneſs, which we know to be the Office of the Moon.

(3.) The Ornament of her Head, *Upon her Head a Crown of twelve Stars*: Where would be noticed, 1. The Matter of this Ornament, *Stars.* We interpreted before, *Chap.* i. 21. of the Angels of the Churches. We have have the Number, *Twelve*; which all know, was the Number of the *Apoſtles*, and no doubt is to be underſtood of their Doctrine preached by the Miniſtry of the Church. As for the Myſteries here in this Number, I know nothing of them, further than that a Church can never be right ſettled, which is not *built upon the Foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets*, Eph. ii. 20. 2. The Form, *A Crown*; which ſhews the Union and Harmony of theſe Stars. *Love* and *Uniformity* are the great Beauty of a Goſpel-miniſtry; and that Church is happy, who are bleſſed with a ſufficient Miniſtry, ſo diſpoſed. That the Church is repreſented to us as *crowned*, denotes her Succeſs and Proſperity, and herein agrees with the Emblem in the *firſt Seal.*

3. The State and Condition of this Woman, or the Church, *v.* 2. where is, 1. Her Caſe. 2. Her Exerciſe.

(1.) The *Caſe* of the Church, ſtill cloſs upon the main *Emblem*, *She being with Child.* We had her a chaſt Wife, and now a fruitful Mother; for there is a teeming Womb: This, no doubt, reſpects the Care and ſtrong Deſire of the Church, and every Member thereof, to propagate the Goſpel, and bring over others to the Faith; As we find in the Apoſtle *Paul*, who had no ſmall Share of this primitive Spirit, *Gal.* iv. 19. *My little Children, of whom I travail in Birth again, until Chriſt be formed in you.* Which exactly anſwers to Chriſt's Commiſſion, *Mat.* xxviii. 19. *Go ye therefore and teach all Nations*, or rather, *diſciple all Nations.* This is the eager Deſire of the whole Church; for it is given her as the Ground of her greateſt Comfort, *Iſa.* liv. 1. *Sing, O Barren, thou that didſt not bear, break forth into Singing, and cry aloud, thou that didſt not travail with Child; for more are the Children of the Deſolate, than the Children of the married Wife, ſaith the Lord.*

(2.) Her Exerciſe, *She cried, travailing in Birth, and pained to be delivered.* It is a good Rule, and worthy of Obſervation, *That in the Inveſtigation of Scripture-Metaphors, all Tenderneſs is to be employed, leſt ſomething unworthy of the Honour and Purity of the Goſpel ſhould be advanced:* Which, in a ſpecial Manner, is to take Place here. In general, this Type declares, that the Church does not *propagate* or multiply without Difficulty; and that the Trouble is ſuch, as may juſtly be compared to the *Throws* and Pangs in *Child-birth*: For theſe great Agonies ſhe endures are manifold, and from different Cauſes, the Difficulty of Converſion, the Oppoſition made thereto by corrupt Nature, the World, and Satan; which makes the Converſion of any juſtly deſerve the Name of *Conqueſt*, as we had it, *Chap.* vi. 2.

II. We have a new Emblem of the ſecond Seal, yet of ſome Affinity, as we found in the laſt; this we have *v.* 3. where, 1. What is ſaid thereof in general. 2. A particular

ticular Deſcription of the Appearance of this Emblem, who is Antagoniſt to the former.

1. The general Account of this Party, *And there appeared another Wonder* [or Sign] *in Heaven.* There is no Variation in this Preface from what we had, *v.* 1. only the firſt Sign is called *great*, and deſervedly, as we have heard; which is not ſaid of this: The Reaſon is plain, the firſt was more *excellent*, tho' leſs *formidable* and terrible; beſides, this ſecond Emblem had been long in the World before the Goſpel-Church, and therefore not ſo ſtrange.

2. There is a particular Deſcription of the Appearance of this Emblem, where is to be noticed, 1. The Type itſelf. 2. What is extraordinary therein: Both of them have ſomething prodigious in them.

(1.) The Type itſelf, *A great Dragon.* Dragon is generally owned to be a Kind of *Serpent*, and has the Name *Dragon* becauſe of its ſharp Sight. That it is really a Sort of Serpent, ſeems plain from *v.* 9. of this Chapter, where what is called *Dragon* in the firſt Clauſe, is deſigned *Serpent* in the next. Some think this to be the true *Regulus* or *Cockatrice*, which, Naturaliſts ſay, kills by the Sight. It is noted alſo of this Sort of Serpent, that it is moſt unreaſonably malicious againſt Mankind, and does not ſo vent its Spite againſt any other Creature; and yet it does not feed on humane Fleſh, as many other ravenous Beaſts do upon the Prey they catch. But it is evident here, we are not to take it in a proper Senſe; for, as the Text ſays, it is only a *Sign* or Repreſentative; but what it ſignifies, is not univerſally agreed. If we look to *v.* 9. we might be tempted to think the *Devil* is meant thereby: Of this Thought are many Expoſitors, from *v.* 9. which we ſhall afterwards conſider. But, as we ſhewed it was reaſonable to believe that the Woman here is the ſame with the *firſt Seal*, Chap. vi 2. So it is no leſs juſt to think this to be meant of the *ſecond Seal*, Chap. vi. 4. where we read of a *red Horſe*, and here of a red Dragon on the Place: We thought this pointed at Heatheniſm, the firſt Enemy the Church had to engage.

Object. Why then is this red Dragon expreſly called Satan, *v.* 9. *The great red Dragon, called the Devil, and Satan?* *Anſw.* Becauſe Satan did ſupport that Power, and was worſhipped therein; ſo we are told, that the Devil was worſhipped under the Name of *Mars* at *Rome*, and the City called *Martia*; and therefore, the Apoſtle tells, 1 *Cor.* x. 20. the *Heathens* Worſhip was *performed to Devils, and not to God.* And no doubt *Satan* would ſtir up all the Heathen Powers in the World againſt the Chriſtians. Nor ſhall I oppoſe them that ſay, *Rome* might be called *Satan*, becauſe his Seat was there; tho', I believe, none will refuſe but there were more independent Heatheniſh Powers than *Rome* in Being, when the Goſpel made its March through the World. We find it alſo ſaid of Heatheniſh Powers, *Rev.* ii. 20. that they ſhould *caſt ſome of them into Priſon*: Now, it is certain, the Church of *Smyrna*, as all the other Churches in *Aſia*, was only perſecuted by *Heathens*; yet it reads in the Text, *The Devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into Priſon.*

(2.) We have what was extraordinary in this Type, in ſeveral very memorable Particulars, which we point at, 1. *Great*, which ſometimes notes the Bulk of a Thing; and this ſays it was *huge* or prodigious in its Size. Naturaliſts tell, This is true of the *Dragon*, which is, by far, bigger than any other Kind of Serpent. *Bochart* quotes ſome, who account for Dragons from 100 to 500 Foot in Length, and proportionably thick; and we are ſure the Scripture ranks this amongſt the largeſt Creatures, *Pſal.* lxxiv. 13, 14. *Thou brakeſt the Dragons in the Waters, thou brakeſt the Heads of Leviathan.* It is alſo noted in Scripture to be a moſt voracious Creature; and ſo, with Alluſion thereto, it is ſaid, *Jer.* li. 34. *He hath ſwallowed me up like a Dragon.* This holds plainly of Heathen *Rome*; and will yet be truer, if we add thereto the other *Heathen Powers* then in Being, for they were both bulky and greedy. 2. This *Dragon* is called *red*, to be ſure, for the ſame Reaſon the Horſe in the ſecond Seal is ſaid to be of this Colour. 3. This Dragon *had ſeven Heads*, which is plainly extraordinary; nor find I any Thing in Scripture can give Light thereto, till we come to *Chap.* xvii. As for theſe Conceits, They are to be meant of the ſeven Hills on which the City of *Rome* ſtood; they are very weak, and not worth the Examining: We are ſure they do not ſignify Hills, for they are expreſly called *ſeven Kings.* It is yet as ſenſleſs to underſtand ſeveral Sorts of Governments in *Rome*, to the Number of Seven; as *Kings, Conſuls, Dictators, Decemvirs, Tribunes, Emperors, Popes.* Of this many are fond; but we will more opportunely meet with both theſe afterwards. 4. This Dragon *had ten Horns.* That *Horn* is an Emblem of *Power*, is evident from what was ſaid on *Chap.* v. 6. It is alſo plain from *Daniel*, Chap. vii. 24. *The ten Horns are ten Kings.* *Strabo* mentions ten Provinces in the Empire of *Rome*, that had the Title of *King* beſtowed upon their Governors; but neither will this be found ſolid. 5. *Seven Crowns upon his Head.* A Crown is an Emblem of Sovereignty; here it is ſaid the *Crowns*

are on the *Heads*, and not on the *Horns*, as we find, *Chap.* xiii. becauſe they had not yet received them, as we will find, *Chap.* xvii. when we will better underſtand what is here ſaid; nor do I incline to anticipate. In general, then, I think, this gives us a very lively Deſcription of *Heatheniſm*: Nor ſhall I refuſe but in a particular Manner it may be applied to *Heathen Rome*, who was ſo vain, as believe themſelves (as did others before) to be Maſters of the Univerſe; and therefore we read, *Luke* ii. 1. *There went out a Decree from* Ceſar Auguſtus, *that all the World ſhould be taxed.* And we are ſure this was the firſt Enemy engaged the *Church*; and ſo this *Dragon* may be the Emblem thereof.

4 And his Tail drew the third Part of the Stars of Heaven, and did caſt them to the Earth: And the Dragon ſtood before the Woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her Child as ſoon as it was born.

5 And ſhe brought forth a Man-child, who was to rule all Nations with a Rod of Iron: And her Child was caught up unto God, and to his Throne.

6 And the Woman fled into the Wilderneſs, where ſhe hath a Place prepared of God, that they ſhould feed her there a Thouſand two hundred and threeſcore Days.

In this Condition of theſe Parties, is, 1. That of the *Dragon*, *v.* 4. 2. That of the *Woman*, in the reſt.

I. The Condition of the *Dragon*, where, 1. His Succeſs and Power. 2. His warlick Poſture, and Readineſs for Miſchief to the Woman.

1. His Succeſs and Power, in which I notice, ſhortly, 1. Againſt whom the *Dragon* prevailed, *The Stars in Heaven.* This may reſpect the *Roman Succeſs* over all their Enemies, or Neighbours, which may be deſigned *Stars*, for the Reaſons given, *Chap.* vi. 13. Here we cannot underſtand them of any Part of the Church; for they are diſtinguiſhed from the whole Church. 2. The Method of his Power as exerciſed, *He drew* [or ſwept away] *with his Tail.* We had the Meaning of *Tail*, Chap. ix. 10. and may be taken in the ſame Senſe for the Policy and armed Force of the *Romans*. 3. The Extent, as to the Number of their Conqueſts, *The third Part*; which ſhews, however great their warlick Expeditions were, yet they were not (as they vainly talked) univerſal. Here the *Spirit of God* makes them to be but Maſters of a *third Part* of the World; and here is alſo the Nature of their Victories, *They caſt them to the Earth.* We have a Parallel to this in *Daniel*, Chap. viii. 10. *It waxed great even to the Hoſt of Heaven, and it caſt down ſome of the Hoſt and of the Stars to the Ground, and ſtamped upon them.* Which, in both Places, is to be underſtood of putting them out of all Power, and wreſting their native Sovereignties from them. This was as true of the *Grecian* as the *Roman* Succeſs.

2. His Poſture with Reſpect to the *Church*; his Succeſs againſt others made him confident in this Caſe, where we have to view, 1. His Poſture, *He ſtood before the Woman*; i. e. he waited with all Diligence, and at Hand too; he had his Plots deep laid, and wanted only an Opportunity to put his Fraud and Violence in Execution; he would nip the Church in the very Bud. This was alſo *Herod*'s Project to deſtroy Chriſt in his Cradle, and thereby prevent His Increaſe and Succeſs. 2. His Deſign, *That he might devour her Child as ſoon as it was born.* Here, it is plain, we cannot apply this to the *Birth of our Saviour*; for *Herod*, whom they make the *Dragon*, knew nothing of the Impregnation of the bleſſed Virgin: He had no Expectations of his Birth; for he did not ſo much as know of him, till after he was ſome Time born. And therefore we are to underſtand this of *Chriſt myſtical*: The *Dragon* endeavoured to prevent the Propagation of the Goſpel, and the Increaſe of the Church; as *Pharaoh*, who is alſo called a *Dragon*, Ezek. xxix. 3. *I am againſt thee*, Pharaoh *King of* Egypt, *the great red Dragon.* He gave Orders to kill all the Males of the *Iſraelites*, in the very Birth; in Alluſion to which, Heathen *Rome* eſſayed early to ſmother an Infant *Church.*

II. We have the State of the Woman, *v.* 5, 6. which is very compaſſionable, and will appear the more ſo, if we conſider her Production, and Preſervation, as repreſented in theſe two Verſes.

1. Her Production, or what ſhe brought forth, *A Man-child.* We ſhewed before, that the Church is emblematically repreſented by a *Woman*; and ſo what comes of her, it to be meant of the *Increaſe* of the Church, and then *Chriſt perſonally* is not to be meant thereby: Beſides, this Production was at leaſt a hundred Years after the *Birth of Chriſt*, if we may believe all this Increaſe to be after this Viſion, which is reaſonable

nable, becauſe there muſt be a Seed before Increaſe; and what we have here is expreſly called a *Sign*, which is not a plain *Narration*, but a figurative *Repreſentation* of ſomething to come. Much leſs can I yield, that this Man-child ſhould be *Conſtantine* the Great: Tho', I own, God honoured him to do much Service to his Church; yet, after all, I think, there is enough ſaid by Writers about him, if not too much: For, be this Birth who it will, it muſt comprehend the whole Iſſue of this Woman, at leaſt before the War aftermentioned; and, tho' we read of no more Births than one, yet we hear of the *Remnant of her Seed*, v. 17. And ſo this *Child* is a collective Expreſſion, and takes in the whole Brood of the Church under *Paganiſm*, and in Spite of its Efforts to hinder the ſame. Nor is it unordinary to expreſs the Church by one Perſon, 1 *Cor.* xii. 12. *As the Body is one, and hath many Members, and all the Members of that one Body being many, are one Body; ſo alſo is Chriſt*, which is plainly meant of *Chriſt myſtical*. That here the Production is called a *Man-child*, may be for theſe Reaſons, 1. To expreſs the infantine State of the Church. 2. To ſhew it was to grow. 3. To declare the Dignity of the Church, repreſented under the more excellent Sex. 4. As a Sign of the Wiſdom and Strength the Church was to arrive at, when it comes *to the Fulneſs of the Stature and Meaſure of a Man*. We are further to notice, 1. The Deſign of this Iſſue. 2. God's Care about them.

(1.) The Deſign of this Iſſue, *Who was to rule all Nations with a Rod of Iron*. This was propheſied of Chriſt, *Pſal.* ii. 9. which has moved ſome Interpreters to think it is intirely meant of him. Yet, it would be conſidered, tho' it be eminently verified in him, yet it is alſo promiſed to the Church, *Rev.* ii. 26, 27. *He that overcometh, and keepeth my Words unto the End, unto him will I give Power over the Nations, and he ſhall rule them with a Rod of Iron*. Where it is meant of particular Members of the Church, and it muſt be much more true of the whole. Beſides, it is plain from *v.* 11. of this Chapter, theſe who rule, are ſuch as *overcome by the Blood of the Lamb*. We explain'd the Words above.

(2.) God's Care about this Child, *Her Child was caught up unto God, and to his Throne*. This points at the Exaltation of the Church, and God's Protection of her. Many think the whole of this Verſe, except the firſt Clauſe, and all the next to be advanced here by Way of Anticipation: And that here we have mentioned before the Engagement, what fell out after it, becauſe the Church's Deliverance followed the Conflict, and the Church's Flight into the *Wilderneſs* followed both; and ſo they would have this whole Paſſage come in after the End of the *v.* 9. This tells ſmoothly; but that there is an untolerable *Disjointing* of the *Word of God*, which by no Means ſhould be allowed: It were a great deal more ſafe, to acknowledge our Ignorance. Others ſay, This declares the Aſcenſion of Chriſt: But it would be minded what was ſaid above about the Birth of this Child, which removes fully this Thought here. Beſides, had the *Spirit of God* deſigned to entertain the Church with a Compend of the Goſpel, we might have expected ſomething of his long Tract of Humiliation, and a Word of his Reſurrection, which however we have not. But there is one Reaſon behind, If by this Man-child we are to underſtand Jeſus Chriſt in his Birth and glorious Aſcenſion, then, to be ſure, by the Woman we muſt mean the *Virgin Mary*; and how this will apply to her, which we have mentioned in the following Verſe, any may conſider: For it is ridiculous to ſay, That reſpects her Flight into *Egypt*, becauſe that happened many Years before our *Lord's Aſcenſion*, but in this Text it follows it. Nor will it be leſs criminal in theſe learned Men to mangle the Scripture, than for others whom they blame for that Fault. There is yet leſs Ground to underſtand it of *Conſtantine*'s Glorification. I cannot underſtand how a great many Verſions will have in the Word *up* here; nor does the Word ἁρπάζω neceſſarily include it; nor indeed is it ever ſo rendered in Scripture, but where there is ſome other additional Word that neceſſarily requires it: For the Word ſignifies to *ſnatch*, or pull with Force and Expedition, *John* x. 28. *Neither ſhall any Man pluck them out of my Hand*. And again, *Matth.* xi. 12. *The Kingdom of Heaven ſuffereth Violence, and the Violent take it by Force*. To underſtand all this, and leave theſe idle Stories, we would remember *John* had all this Viſion in Heaven; and there was the Emblem of the *Dragon*, as well as of the *Woman*; and therefore it is needleſs to imagine the *Child* was *caught up*, but the *Child* was ſeaſonably and powerfully *ſnatched away* from the devouring *Dragon*, and brought to God, near his Throne, for Safety and Preſervation; for the Emblem of the Throne was ſtill in View. This is eaſy and natural, and therefore to be choſen, before what rather perplexes than clears the Text. And ſo God is ſaid to hide his own *in the Hollow of his Hand*, and *under his Wings*: In none of all theſe Expreſſions do any ſeek for Myſteries. Here then we ſee the Care and Power of God employed about a *growing* Church, in Spite of all her Adverſaries: Here alſo the *Dragon* fails of his Deſign, which was to obſtruct the Pro-

pagation of the Goſpel. Having now ſeen the Condition of this *Child*, we are to return to the Mother, and view,

2. Her Preſervation in a very long calamitous Condition, *v.* 6. Where we have to notice the Scope in general; which may be of uſe to deliver the Text from many Obtruſions. This then I take to be of a Piece with what we had *Chap.* xi. 3. *of the propheſying of the Witneſſes in Sackcloth, for the ſame Space* here mentioned; which ſays, The *Witneſſes* and the *Woman* are two different Emblems for the ſame Thing. If it ſhould be ſaid then, Theſe two Chapters are the ſame, under different Emblems; which ſome think a very wide Way of working: I anſwer, There is plainly a Difference: For the former Chapter gives the compleat Hiſtory of the Church's Sufferings under all her Adverſaries, which eſtabliſhes the Period of her compleat Adverſity; and ſo Part of that Chapter belongs to each of the three perſecuting Seals: Here we have only the prophetical View of here Wreſtlings under the firſt of them, *viz.* the *red Horſe*, or the *great red Dragon*. And tho' it be ſaid here, the Period of the Church's Sufferings is to be juſt 1260 Years, oftner than once; yet it is not ſaid, this was to be the Period of the *Dragon*, whom we find here to fall long before the End of the Church's Calamity. This I take to be plain to a Demonſtration, from the Concluſion of this Chapter; where, after the Dragon was defeat, and thrown out of his Seat, he falls upon another Way of vexing the Church, which continued under another Shape ſeveral Hundreds of Years after *Heatheniſm*, in its properſt Notion, was brought very low, and next unto nothing. That this General may have ſome more Light, we ſhall conſider in this theſe few Branches, 1. The Woman's Sanctuary. 2. Her Support while there. 3. The Time of her Continuance therein.

(1.) The Woman's Sanctuary, *She fled into the Wilderneſs, where ſhe hath a Place prepared of God.* When the Church beheld how her Increaſe cauſed the Choler of the *Dragon* to boil up to ſuch a murdering Height, immediately ſhe thinks of a Retreat from the Face of ſuch an Adverſary, according to the Direction of her Lord, *If they perſecute you in one Place, flee to another.* This Sanctuary is more ſafe than opulent, as we will find from what is ſaid of it: 1. It is called *the Wilderneſs*; Which ſhews us, either it was the only Wilderneſs, or that there was not ſuch another. Now, if the *Woman* was to be taken figuratively, as I think is proven, ſo muſt alſo the *Wilderneſs*: This Word literally ſignifies a Deſert, and is oppoſed to cultivate Ground. Nor is any Thing more uſual in Scripture, than to expreſs the Church by a *Vineyard*, a *Corn-field*, &c. and therefore, in Oppoſition thereto, we are here to underſtand theſe Nations, where the Goſpel either never had been, or was extinct; but I rather incline to take it for the former: So that the Perſecutions raiſed by the *Dragon* tended, by the all-wiſe and powerful Providence of God, to carry the Goſpel to other Parts of the World. This never miſſeth, when the Word of God is rejected in one Place, it ſtill goes to another: The Perſecution raiſed at *Jeruſalem*, brought the Goſpel to far diſtanced Nations; As within this Century, the Perſecution raiſed in *Britain* was a Mean of conveying the Means of Grace to the diſtant *Indies*, where to this Day it has Footing. This is the Verification of our Lord's Words, *Matth.* xxi. 43. *The Kingdom of God ſhall be taken from you, and given unto a Nation bringing forth Fruits.* 2. This Sanctuary was not ſtraitned, but had Room enough; therefore it is called *a Place*, and which they were to have eaſy Acceſs to: Which needs be no Wonder, when we conſider, 3. It was *prepared of God.* This ſeems to denote the Fitneſs and Suitableneſs of this Place, tho' very homely. We have the ſame Phraſe made Uſe of to a notable Purpoſe by our Lord, *John* xiv. 2. *I will prepare a Place for you.*

(2.) Her Support while there, *That they ſhould feed her there.* There is no Place where God cannot, yea will not, provide for the Wants of his Church. This Food muſt be agreeable to the Nature of the Woman, and ſo the Senſe is, whatever is neceſſary for preſerving and ſtrengthning his Church, as ſound Doctrine, the Influences of his holy Spirit, and alſo a Competency of temporal Subſtance: He will make, both in a ſpiritual and temporal Senſe, that Promiſe to hold, *Thy Bread ſhall be given thee, and thy Water ſhall be ſure.* Nor need we dwell on that Queſtion, Who ſhould feed them? For it ſeems to me indifferent whether we take this perſonally, or imperſonally; becauſe, to be ſure, God, who had prepared the Place, would not fail to prepare alſo faithful Caterers and Diſpenſers.

(3.) The Time how long ſhe was to continue therein, *A Thouſand two hundred and threeſcore Days.* This is the ſame Period of Time mentioned above, *Chap.* xi. 2, 3. And I verily think it be the ſame, both as to its Beginning and Ending.

I ſhall not refuſe but there may be an Alluſion here to the *Iſraelites* entring the *Wilderneſs*, as ſoon as delivered from *Pharaoh*; but the Flight of the Prophet *Elijah* from *Ahab* to the Wilderneſs, where he was fed, firſt by a *Raven*, and then by a *Widow*

dow in *Zarephath* for the Space of 3 Years and an Half, was the proper Emblem of this; and there is a great Harmony betwixt them. There is but one Thought more I ſhall notice here, and it is of theſe who make the Man-child Chriſt, and the Woman to be the Church, which was driven into the *Wilderneſs*, immediately upon the Back of *Chriſt's Aſcenſion*. I am ſure it is not poſſible for the great Name of the Promoters of this Senſe to ſupport it; nor do they bring any Thing elſe: Beſides, if we conſider our Lord in no tolerable Senſe can be called the *Son* of the Church, for he is the *Huſband* and *Lord* thereof. But the Miſtake was in the Senſe, *Caught up to God, and to his Throne*, which we cleared.

7 And there was War in Heaven, Michael and his Angels fought againſt the Dragon, and the Dragon fought and his Angels,
8 And prevailed not, neither was their Place found any more in Heaven.

If we have hit the Notion of Heaven in the Beginning of *Chap.* iv. and hold it here, as I ſee no Reaſon for altering its Senſe, our Work and Difficulty will be the leſs; for they are much ſtraitned in inveſtigating theſe Words, who by Heaven underſtand the Church. After this we have only to conſider, 1. The Parties. 2. Their Engagement. 3. The Victory.

I. The Parties, *Michael and his Angels, and the Dragon and his Angels.*

1*ſt* Party is, *Michael and his Angels*, which we would view ſeparately.

(1.) There is the General, *Michael*. By whom we are not to mean the Church, before repreſented under the Emblem of a Woman; yet we are to underſtand thereby the Woman's Partiſan or *Second*, for to be ſure he is Captain-general of the Church; and who ſhould this be but our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, under the Name of *Michael*? Which will be plain, if we conſider what is ſaid in Scripture of this *Michael*; As, 1. He is called *the Archangel*: Whence it is plain, there are no more *Archangels* but this one, of whom we read twice, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 16. *The Voice of the Archangel*, &c. This can be nothing elſe but the Voice of Chriſt that raiſeth the Dead. Again, *Jude* 9. *Michael the Archangel contending with the Devil*: For Chriſt only has Power to fight Satan effectually; *He came to deſtroy the Works of the Devil.* This Perſon is called the *Archangel*, or Prince of Angels: A Deſignation only competent to Jeſus Chriſt, who has all the Angels in Heaven in his Commiſſion, and ſends them forth *to them as Miniſters, who are Heirs of eternal Life*, *Heb.* i. 11. 2. He is brought in here as *Captain-general* of the Church's Armies, and ſo can be meant of none but Chriſt. We read early of this *Commander*, Joſh. v. 14. and called *a Man*, for he was ſo in Appearance to *Joſhua*, as afterwards he was in Reality; and he owned himſelf to be *Captain of the Lord's Hoſt.* This is plainly foretold of Chriſt, *Iſa.* lv. 4. *I have given him for a Leader and a Commander of the People.* It is that ſame *Michael*, who is called to *Daniel*, Chap. x. 13. *One of the chief Princes*: Or as ſome ſay it ſhould be rendred, *The principal One of the Princes*, i. e. the one Prince of Princes. And afterwards one of the Angels ſpeaking to *Daniel*, *v.* 21. calls this *Michael*, *Your Prince.* And again, *Dan.* xii. 1. he is called *the great Prince*; which exactly agrees to what the Apoſtle ſays of Chriſt, 1 *Tim.* vi. 15. *The bleſſed and only Potentate, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* 3. It is no leſs evident from his Name, *Michael*, which ſignifies, *Who is as God.* It matters not whether it be by Way of Interrogation or plain Enunciation. Some again render it *equal to God.* Whichever Way we take it, it is plain the Deſignation cannot agree to any mere Creature, but is moſt agreeable to Chriſt, *Who is the Brightneſs of the Father's Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon*, Heb. i. 3. and called *the Captain of our Salvation*, Heb. ii. 10.

(2.) There is this General's Army, called *his Angels.* Some think heavenly Angels are only to be meant here. I ſhall not refuſe but Chriſt, at his Pleaſure, may uſe the Miniſtry of holy Angels: But I am pretty well aſſured they are neither ſolely nor principally to be underſtood here; for the Way how theſe Angels overcame, is mentioned *v.* 11. *They overcame by the Blood of Lamb, and by the Word of their Teſtimony: And they loved not their Lives unto the Death*, Which plainly tells, we are by them to underſtand *Believers* in the Militant Church; no Matter whether we make them *Miniſters* or *private Chriſtians*, for I doubt not but both are meant.

2. The other Party is, *The Dragon and his Angels.* I ſpoke before of the Dragon, now it remains we enquire about his Angels. Here I think we are under no Neceſſity of meaning by theſe Angels the damned Fiends, whom ſome ſuppoſe to have come up from Hell in Legions to this War: There is no doubt Satan and his foul Spirits would

give all the Aſſiſtance they could againſt the Church. But by theſe Angels I am ready to think we are to mean Heathen *Emperors, Deputies, Judges, Generals, Soldiers,* &c. who are ſent forth againſt the *Chriſtian Church* to deſtroy her: And theſe in as proper a Senſe may be called the *Devil's Angels* or Armies, as the Saints are called *Chriſt's Angels* or Armies; for the one follows the Meaſures of Satan as cheerfully, as the other does the Orders of Chriſt.

II. The Engagement betwixt theſe Parties, in two Expreſſions, *There was War,* and *they fought*; from which we are to conclude a ſtated and continued War. It was not one ſingle Action, or a few ſmall Skirmiſhes, but it laſted a long Time. Indeed there is an everlaſting War betwixt the Church and her Enemies, tho' ſometimes the Hoſtilities are greater and more notable than at other; but there never was, nor ever will be, a Peace or Truce concluded: Yet the War, this Part of the Prophecy ſeems to point at, is that Struggle betwixt *Chriſtianity* and *Heatheniſm*, for many Centuries after *John* had this Viſion. Here we have to conſider how each Party fought; for it is ſaid in the Text, *Michael and his Angels fought,* and *the Dragon and his Angels fought*: To be ſure they fought not the ſame Way; we ſhall therefore treat of them ſeverally.

1. We are to notice the Efforts of the Aggreſſor, *Michael and his Angels fought againſt the Dragon.* Where I think 'tis plain there is a Fighting peculiar to *Michael,* and another Fighting which he has in Conjunction with his Angels; theſe we would glance at apart.

(1.) *Michael fought.* We are to underſtand this as a *Mediatorial Action*; for, as ſuch, all Power in Heaven and in Earth is committed to him; and therefore I think it were hard to confine this to *his triumphing over Hell and Death on the Croſs.* Tho' I would not exclude this as the Foundation of all the reſt, yet there is good Reaſon to believe this War is much poſterior to the Crucifixion of Chriſt, if we may allow (as the Text ſeems to crave) that both the Woman and the Dragon had ſubſiſted ſometime together before this open War; and ſo I take *Michael*'s Acts of *Aggreſſion* to conſiſt in theſe, 1. In the Exerciſe of his Providence: He ſent the Goſpel of his Grace into all Corners of the World, and ordered all Occurrences to make for its free Courſe. 2. In the Communication of his Spirit: To open the Hearts, as well as the Ears, of theſe to whom the Preaching of the Word was ſent. 3. In taking out of the Way cruel and inveterate Enemies, by Means unexpected, as happened to many cruel and ravenous Wolves. And laſtly, In intirely extirpating *Paganiſm*; at leaſt ſo far weakning it, that it was never able to make Head againſt the Church afterwards in its old Shape.

(2.) *Michael* fought in and by his Angels; 1. In directing them to the powerful and effectual Preaching of the Goſpel. 2. By giving his Servants of the Miniſtry a Mouth and Wiſdom, which their Enemies were not able to reſiſt. 3. By directing the whole Church to faithful and fervent Prayers, which he perfumed with the Incenſe of his own Merits, and preſented them to the Father. 4. In bleſſing them all with a ſteady Patience under the hardeſt Sufferings for the Truths they profeſſed: By which Method they did more Harm to the *Kingdom of Satan* under *Heatheniſm,* than a numerous Hoſt could have done, as we ſee *v.* 11.

2. We are to view the *Fighting of the Dragon and his Angels*: Where it is not to be thought they acted nothing but a defenſive Part; for indeed they uſed a Force, natural, or rather wicked, to repel the ſpiritual Armies of *Michael.* The *Dragon,* or rather the *Spirit of the Dragon,* is nothing elſe but the *Devil* acting the *Heathens*; and ſo both of them conſtitute what is here repreſented by *the great red Dragon*: And here his utmoſt Efforts were directed againſt the *Woman* and her *Iſſue,* which no doubt did imploy the *Depths of Satan.* Theſe are more obſcure, and belong not properly to the Province of an Expoſitor: But the Aſſaults of his Angels are more obvious, and may be lightly touched at in theſe few Particulars; 1. By *penal Statutes* againſt *Chriſtianity,* which paſt many a Time by Imperial Authority, under the ſeveral Penalties. 2. By very *ſlanderous and calumnious Aſperſions,* which they invented and ſpread againſt *Chriſtianity* in general, and the moſt eminent Profeſſors in particular. 3. By *Fining, Confining, Baniſhing,* &c. 4. By *extreme Violence,* even to Fire and Sword, yea, all the Cruelties Hell and their wicked Hearts could invent.

III. There is the Victory, *v.* 8. But, becauſe *Michael* did not exert all the Power he had, the Enemy was not utterly extirpate, yet notably routed. We may notice here, 1. The Cauſe of the Dragon's Loſs. 2. The Nature of his Loſs. Both which will be more plain from the following Verſes

1. The Cauſe, *The Dragon and his Angels* (for they are laſt ſpoken of, and next mentioned) *prevailed not.* It might be well rendered, *They were not able*: And ſo indeed a great many incline to turn it, which prevents much Trouble would otherwiſe caſt

caſt up. It is plain the Word ſignifies more than not to prevail; for two Powers not unequal may engage, and this may be ſaid of any that are not foiled, they did not prevail; but it is much more to ſay, they were not able.

2. The Nature of the Loſs, *Neither was their Place found any more in Heaven*, i. e. the Dragon and his Angels were turned off the Theatre. It is not ſaid they were killed, but ſcattered and chaſed; they loſt their Ground intirely. This Expreſſion is a-kin to that of the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* xxxvii. 10. *Thou ſhalt diligently conſider his Place, and it ſhall not be.* To be ſure their Room was left behind them: The Meaning then is, They were ſo cliverly turned out, that there was not left the leaſt Footſtep of Heatheniſm in its former Condition: This was a notable Alteration made in Affairs. I ſhall not ſay all this happened in the Time of *Conſtantine*, in the Beginning of the fourth Century; for it was ſeveral Years after before Paganiſm got the dead Stroke: But I ſcruple not to ſay, It was before the Riſe of the *Pope*, who got the *Seat* of the *Dragon* in the next Chapter.

9 And the great Dragon was caſt out, that old Serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole World: He was caſt out into the Earth, and his Angels were caſt out with him.

In the Iſſue of this notable Victory, we are to notice, 1. With Reſpect to the *Dragon*. 2. With Reſpect to his Angels.

1. With Regard to the Dragon, we have to view, 1. His Characters, which are ſeverals. 2. His Doom or Fate.

(1.) We would look at his Characters. Beſides that of the *Dragon* formerly explained, 1. He is called *the old Serpent*. I neglect that Notion, That Serpents, when they grow old, turn Dragons: For before, I ſhewed, that the Dragon is a diſtinct Sort of Serpent, and therefore the Word or Term *Serpent* muſt be a General. That here he is called *Old*, ſignifies he was from the Beginning, *i. e.* from the Womb of Time; and ſo it alludes to the Appearance he made, or the Tool he employed in deceiving our *firſt Parents*: Then he was in a common Serpent, but now in the Dragon. This ſhould remember us of his *Craft*, which he has exerciſed againſt God and his Church under many Shapes, from the firſt. And as then he did enter into the Serpent to beguile *Eve*, ſo now he entred into the *Dragon* to deſtroy the *Woman*, the *Church*, if poſſible to deceive the ſecond *Adam*; but ſtill it is the ſame Mover. 2. He is called *Devil*, which I reckon to be a proper Deſignation; it ſignifies a Slanderer or Calumniator, for he was a *Liar from the Beginning, and is the Father of it.* 3. He is called *Satan*, i. e. the *Adverſary* or *Accuſer* in Judgment, becauſe of his Hatred and ingrain'd Enmity, which he has purſued, from his firſt Apoſtaſy, againſt God, Chriſt, and Mankind. 4. He is deſcribed from his Work, *Which deceiveth the whole World.* This is very agreeable with the reſt. Some, by the whole World, underſtand only the Empire of *Rome*: But this is narrow; for it never extended ſo far. Others, by the whole World, underſtand the Reprobate; and think they juſtify this from the ſame Apoſtle, while he ſays, *The whole World lieth in Wickedneſs.* I wiſh this could hold; but we are ſure he has deceived the *Elect*, as well as the *Rejected*, and would have finally carried them off, had it not been for the Grace of Chriſt. And therefore, I think, they are neareſt the Truth, who, by the *whole World*, underſtand all theſe whom he deceives, whether in leſs or more; for he is the *great Deceiver*. It is true, God that keeps Promiſe, takes Care that his own continue not in this Snare, but he breaks the Snare, and they eſcape.

(2.) There is his Fate, *He was caſt out into the Earth.* This, as I ſaid, is not a compleat Deſtruction, as we find, *Chap.* xx. 2. There is great Struggle about this *Caſting out from Heaven*, as in the preceeding Verſe, which will all evaniſh, if we take Heaven for the Theatre of Viſion; and then the Senſe is, he was no more ſeen or found, where he formerly appeared. I own the Thought to be ingenious, and of ſpecial Uſe here, That he was caſt out of his *Temples*, from his *Altars*, and was no more worſhipped as god, for that appeared to the Heathen as Heaven: But yet, this will not make *Heaven* to ſignify the *Church of God*. If this *Caſting* was to be by other Heathens, and be ſo meant here, I ſhall not contradict, that one Part of the World ſhould riſe in Arms againſt another; as we read, *Iſa.* xix. 2. the Lord threatned to *ſtir up* Egypt *againſt* Egypt. This might be made good from Hiſtory, when many a Time the Heathen Part of the World was divided moſt bitterly amongſt themſelves; yea, and that *Empire* fell by *barbarous Nations*. But then, it is added, *He was caſt out into the Earth*: Now, ſeeing in Reaſon we cannot oppoſe *Earth* to the *Church*, but to the Height and Proſperity of Satan's Kingdom under Heatheniſm; it muſt ſignify a State op-

poſite to the former, and as low as that was high; which we find very agreeable to Scripture, *Iſa.* xiv. 12. *How art thou fallen from Heaven, O* Luciſer, *Son of the Morning! thou art caſt down to the Ground, which didſt weaken the Nations.* This is generally thought to be a Prophecy againſt the King of *Babylon*, whom, we are ſure, was never reckoned a Part of the Church: And yet more plainly, *Jer.* li. 53. *Tho'* Babylon *ſhould mount up to Heaven, and tho' ſhe ſhould fortify the Height of her Strength, yet from me ſhall Spoilers come unto her, ſaith the Lord.* So that this is a Viſion of the low and contemptible State of Paganiſh Idolatry, for *Dagan* did fall before the *Ark of God.*

2. The Iſſue of this Victory, with reſpect to his Angels, *They were caſt out with him.* We have already declared what we meant by theſe Angels above, *v.* 7. *viz.* All the legiſlative Powers, and the Executers of their cruel Edicts: Nor need we, as ſome incline to do, except even their Emperors or Kings; for, if they were fierce in their Temper, then were they acted of their covetous Paraſites; if they were more mild and ſober, then their Prieſts could tune them up to work all Manner of Miſchief againſt the poor Chriſtians, and that *pro aris & focis*, or for their gods Sake, in both which *Satan* had no ſmall Hand. And that it is ſaid, Theſe Angels *were caſt out with Satan*; the Meaning is, All theſe had loſt their Power to do Miſchief, however ſteady their Inclinations were. Nothing is more mortifying to the Tools of Iniquity, than to find themſelves incapacitate, either by Want of Authority or Force, and much more if both be in the Caſe, to work that Miſchief they both love and gain by; which was plainly the Matter in Hand.

10 And I heard a loud Voice ſaying in Heaven, Now is come Salvation, and Strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the Power of his Chriſt: For the Accuſer of our Brethren is caſt down, which accuſed them before our God Day and Night.

11 And they overcame him by the Blood of the Lamb, and by the Word of their Teſtimony, and they loved not their Lives unto the Death.

12 Therefore rejoice, ye Heavens, and ye that dwell in them: Wo to the Inhabiters of the Earth, and of the Sea; for the Devil is come down unto you, having great Wrath, becauſe he that knoweth he hath but a ſhort Time.

Here we have the Jubilation in a very audible Manner in Heaven. We are ſtill to keep in our Thoughts what *John* ſaw, *Chapter* iv. 5. who no doubt were the Perſons employed in this Work, and this will cut off all Controverſy about the Place; for the other Expreſſions in the Preface, we have ſeen often before: Nor do I think them of any Moment to unriddle the Prophecy. I ſhall only conſider, 1. The Ground of this Triumph. 2. The Way how the Victory was obtained. 3. The notable Conſequents thereof.

I. There is the Ground of this Song, *v.* 10. in theſe ſeveral Parts;

1. *Now is Salvation come.* The Time is pointed at in the Adverb, *Now*; this, to be ſure, leads back to *v.* 7, &c. for this points at that, and ſo the Thankſgiving keeps Pace with the Mercy. And that it is ſaid *Salvation is come*, denotes the Appearance of Chriſt in Behalf of his Church, in a very notable Manner, delivering her from the Jaws of the *Dragon*, and after ſuch a Manner as ſhe never experienced before; for at that Time the Chriſtian Religion was able to hold up its Head in Spite of her Enemies.

2. *Strength is come.* This is to be meant of the Efficacy of God, and does indeed ſuppoſe *Strength irreſiſtable*; for *Michael* the great *Samſon* had ſhaken himſelf in a moſt unuſual Manner: Or, if we pleaſe, this is to point at the Strength of the Church, now while reinforced, both by the Increaſe of her Number, and the Graces of the *Spirit of God.*

3. *The Kingdom of our God is come.* We are not to underſtand this, as if God had never a Kingdom before; for that never failed, tho' it was ſometimes obſcured: But now there was to be an open and avowed Government, and the Exerciſe of a Policy, according to the Rules of the *Word of God*; ſo that the Church never had the Shape of a Kingdom before.

4. *The Power of his Chriſt is come*; or the Authority: Which we may well underſtand of a Diſcovery of his juſt *Right*, hitherto much darkned by *Heatheniſm.* Nor ſhall

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I refuſe, but this may reſpect his vindictive Power againſt his Enemies, as well as the Influences of his Grace in the Propagation of the Goſpel.

5. The Defeat of the Church's Enemies, which is alſo brought in as the Evidence of all the reſt. We need not be ſurpriſed the Enemies of the Church are comprehended under a Particular, ſeeing, as we have ſhown, that is truly comprehenſive of all the *Enemies* of the Church: But here we are to notice what is ſaid thereof; where we have, 1. The Character. And, 2. The Condition of this Enemy.

(1.) The Character of this Enemy, from theſe Steps, 1. The Quality of their Guilt, *The Accuſer of the Brethren*: By *Brethren*, we are to underſtand the *Diſciples of Chriſt*; for this Deſignation they have, not only with Reſpect to one another, but alſo with Reſpect to Chriſt, *who is not aſhamed to call them Brethren*: The Devil has employed himſelf thus of old; for, concerning *Job*, he ſaid, *But touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy Face.* How his Inſtruments copy after him, is more than evident, when they charged the Chriſtians with all the Crimes themſelves were guilty of, and aſperſed them as the procuring Cauſes of the publick Judgments happened in the World, as *Famine*, *Peſtilence*, &c. and thereby expoſed them to the Malice of their inveterate Enemies. And to this Day, the Enemies of the People of God load his Saints with the hard Names of *Hypocrites*, *Schiſmaticks*, *Hereticks*, &c. So that the old Enmity is not extinguiſhed. 2. The Continuance of ſuch in their Sin, *Day and Night* they were and are reſtleſs in this Practice: By this they diſcover themſelves to be the *Children of the Devil*; and therefore the Apoſtle told *Elymas* the Sorcerer, *Acts* xiii. 10. *Thou Child of the Devil, thou Enemy of all Righteouſneſs, wilt thou not ceaſe to pervert the right Ways of the Lord?* 3. The Impudence of this their Villany, it was done *before God.* To be ſure, all Sin is in his View, but ſomething further ſeems to be pointed at here; for they did it under the Shadow of Religion, and made that a Cloke for all their Villanies. It is the moſt ordinary Thing in the World, to perſecute the Religious, out of a ſeeming *Zeal* for Religion. I own, *Luther* was in the right, when he adviſed *Perſecution* to be left to the *Papiſts*, for it was one of the ſureſt Characteriſticks of the Man of Sin.

(2.) The Condition of this Enemy, *He is caſt down.* It is the ſame in Senſe with *caſten out*, and juſtifies what we ſaid thereof, That it is not a total Abolition of the *Kingdom of Satan* in Heatheniſm, but only the bringing the ſame very low, as indeed it did before the *Papal* Part of Antichriſt aroſe.

II. The Methods how this Victory was obtained, *v.* 11. *viz.* in theſe, 1. *By the Blood of the Lamb.* The great Difficulty here is, To whom this is to be applied? Some think to *Michael*, that this true *Samſon* did more Miſchief to his Enemies by his Death, than in his Life; which is expreſly ſaid of Chriſt, *Heb.* ii. 14. *Through Death he deſtroyed him that had the Power of Death, that is the Devil.* No doubt this is a great Truth; but I cannot go in with this Senſe here, becauſe it is expreſly applied to *many*, in the firſt Clauſe of the Verſe, *They overcame him by the Blood of the Lamb.* So that it ſeems plainly to be underſtood of the *Brethren* mentioned, *v.* 10. Again, had this been the proper Work of Chriſt, it would run, *He overcame them by his Blood*; and thus the *They* who overcame, differ from the *Lamb*, by whom they overcame: And therefore, I think, this is to be meant of *Believers.* But then, another Difficulty ariſeth, How *Believers* may be ſaid to overcome by the *Blood of the Lamb?* Some, to expede this, turn διὰ *for*, i. e. they overcame for the Sake of the Blood of the Lamb; and then his Blood is the meritorious Cauſe: But it ſeems hard to make the Prepoſition ſignify *for* in the firſt Clauſe, and *by* in the ſecond; it will do better to allow it to obtain the ſame Signification, and the Senſe will be as full, and more agreeable, *viz.* Believers do not gain the Victory over *Satan* and his Agents by any Thing in themſelves, but by that Vertue they derive by Faith from the *Blood of Chriſt*: So it is ſaid, *Rom.* viii. 37. *We are more than Conquerors, through him that loved us.* And again, *Eph.* vi. 16. *Faith is that whereby we ſhall be able to quench the fiery Darts of the wicked One.* The Scope of the Place juſtifies this; for the Accuſer libelled them before God, and here Chriſt preſented his Blood as the atoning Sacrifice, which by *Faith* Believers receive: And therefore, by this Advocation, they overcome the Adverſary in Judgment, by Faith in his Blood: *Who is he that condemneth? it is Chriſt that died, Rom.* viii. 34.

2. *By the Word of their Teſtimony.* Some underſtand this of the Preaching of the Goſpel, called, *The Word of the Teſtimony*; becauſe Miniſters of the Goſpel do boldly hold forth the *Doctrine of Salvation*, in Oppoſition to all Error. No doubt, this is a Part of it; but, when it is ſpoken of the whole Church, it ſeems hard to reſtrict it to Miniſters: Tho' it be ſure the Word in their Mouths is *powerful to the pulling down of ſtrong Holds*, and *is ſharper than any two-edged Sword*; yet every Believer, by his

open Profeſſion of Chriſt, may be ſaid to have a *Word of Teſtimony* in Favours of Chriſt: And ſo it takes in, not only the Owning of his Doctrine by their Mouths, but the Practizing it in their Life; for, by both theſe, Believers put to Shame all the Adverſaries of the Truth, and bring a Revenue of Praiſe to God.

3. *They loved not their Lives unto the Death.* This points at their Patience under the hardeſt of Sufferings, which, when called to, they underwent with the greateſt Cheerfulneſs, not only to *Bonds* and *Impriſonment*, or *Confiſcation of Goods*, but unto the Loſs of *Limbs* and *Life*. It ſeems to be the ſame in Senſe with that, *Acts* xx. 24. *Neither count I my Life dear unto my ſelf, ſo that I might finiſh my Courſe with Joy, and the Miniſtry which I have received of the Lord Jeſus, to teſtify the Goſpel of the Grace of God.* They ſuffered cheerfully, *and rejoiced they were counted worthy to ſuffer for the Name of Jeſus.* They refuſed Deliverance upon ſeemingly eaſy Terms, as the *Bowing before an Image*, the *Surrendering their Bibles*, &c. *Jeſuitick Equivocation* was not known in that Period of the Church; this tended much to the Commendation and Propagation of the Goſpel.

III. The Conſequents of this Victory, in an Exhortation, a Lamentation, and the Reaſon of this laſt, *v.* 12.

1. The Exhortation, which is an Inference from what is ſaid, as appears from the Illative *therefore*. They had good Reaſon to rejoice, when the Dragon and his Angels were caſt out. As for theſe called on, *The Heavens, and they that dwell therein*: No doubt, this would be glad Tidings to the Angels; yet the Church Militant were more concerned therein: And ſo, tho' we allow the heavenly Hoſt to rejoice, yet we may not think the Church on Earth repreſented by the *Elders* and *Living Creatures* were ſilent; nor do I ſee any Difficulty that the Heavens are called to rejoice, ſeeing this may be a *Proſopopeia*, very uſual in Scripture, and always uſed to expreſs the greateſt Joy ſhould be on ſuch weighty Grounds. As for the Act *rejoice*, εὐφραίνεσθε, or be of good Courage, or be chereful, this is to expreſs the Frame of the Mind, and directs to rejoice without Security, and ſeems to require Diligence and Watchfulneſs; for, tho' the *Dragon* was brought low, yet he was not deſtroyed.

2. A Lamentation, *Wo to the Inhabiters of the Earth, and the Sea.* As for the Import of *Wo*, and *Inhabiters*, we had them, *Chap.* viii. 13. and, for the Meaning of *Earth* and *Sea*, we had that, *Chap.* x. 2. nor do I ſee how we can alter the Senſe of any of theſe already given in theſe reſpective Places. To me, this ſeems plainly a Prophecy of the Riſe of *Mahomet* in the Eaſt, and the *Pope* in the Weſt, of which we have a full Account in the next Chapter.

3. The Reaſon of the Lamentation, *For the Devil has come down unto you*, &c. As for the Author of their Miſery, *the Devil*, we explained that before: His Approach, *Has come down unto you*; He is tumbled down from his Excellency, is no more owned as the god of this World, and ſo is under a Neceſſity to alter his Meaſures, or loſe all: And this he would not be ſlack in, for he was reſolved to have another Bout with the Church, both in the Eaſt and Weſt: The former Foil had not made him cede, but, on the Contrary, kindled afreſh his Indignation; and ſo it is ſaid, *He has great Wrath*; his Enmity is the more wheted, ſeeing there were no Hopes further to prevail by barefaced *Paganiſm*, he will work more ſleely under a Maſk of *Religion*; and, leſt one ſhould miſgive, he'll have a Pair. That which drove him to theſe Meaſures, is added, *Becauſe he knoweth he hath but a ſhort Time.* All the Devils know eternal Torments abide them: And they alſo know there is ſome Space of Time to paſs before they be fettered with the *Chains of everlaſting Darkneſs*; therefore they ſaid to Chriſt, *Mat.* viii. 29. *Art thou come to torment us before the Time?* But then, their Time was nearer, by ſeveral Centuries: A few Queſtions will further clear this Paſſage.

Queſt. 1. What is the Time ſpoken of here? *Anſw.* Some take this Time for the Period when *Satan* will be bound 1000 Years, as *Chap.* xx. and thence conclude, that Thouſand Years began a little after the Fall of *Rome* Heathen. Others think this great Wrath is applicable to that Period wherein he will be looſed a little Time, *Chap.* xx. 3. and ſo this muſt reſpect the War of *Gog* and *Magog*: But this would be to make the *Pope* and *Mahomet* to fall before they riſe. Neither of theſe Thoughts have any Footing in the Text, and they plainly croſs other Parts of the Prophecy. Nay, I am ready to believe, *Satan* knew nothing of that thouſand Years Binding, till the Publication of this Prophecy; but, we are ſure he knew of his future Condemnation, that there is a Place prepared for him and his apoſtate Angels, of which I think the Text is ſpeaking.

Queſt. 2. How can that be called a ſhort Time, ſince now at leaſt a thouſand Years are elapſed ſince he met with that notable Defeat, and yet it is not at an End? *Anſw.* *Satan* might be ignorant of the preciſe Period of Time he was to have Liberty to vex the Church; and finding his Kingdom to meet with ſuch a confounding Stroke by the Aboliſhing

Aboliſhing in a great Meaſure of *Heatheniſm*, he might be apprehenſive, in a little Time all Opportunity of doing Miſchief might be cut off from him. Beſides, the Time that has elapſed ſince, is but ſhort in Compariſon of that long Tract of Ages he has had Dominion over the World, being above 4000 Years; and therefore, in that Senſe, it may be called *ſhort*.

Queſt. 3. How can Satan know Things to come, ſince that is a Divine Perfection? *Anſw.* We muſt be very far from allowing him, yea, or the *Angels of Light*, any Thing of *Preſcience*, much leſs of *Omniſcience*: For theſe are Perfections proper to the *Divine Nature*: Nor can Angels, good or bad, know certainly Things to come, more than are revealed to them; yet the Devil has more Knowledge than we imagine; for, beſides the Sagacity of his Nature, which is doubtleſs great, tho' broken as to the moral Integrity thereof, he has a conſiderable Degree of it by Experience, which may be heightned by his conſidering the *Scripture*, to which we are ſure he is no Stranger, tho' he make a perverſe Uſe thereof. As for the Knowledge he has of his own future Miſery, that might be by Revelation; for, as we find God threatned *Adam* in caſe of his Fall, ſo it might be with the Angels before their Fall, tho' we have no Account of it in Scripture: Nor was it needful it ſhould, ſeeing the Deſign of the *Spirit in the Word*, was to inform Man what was neceſſary for him to know.

Queſt. 4. Why is it ſaid of Satan, that he comes down to the Earth and Sea, ſeeing we are ſure *he is reſerved in Chains of everlaſting Darkneſs*? Jude 6. Now, how can he move from one Place to another, and ſet ſo many Machines at Work to diſquiet the World, eſpecially the Church? *Anſw.* His being chained, does not hinder him to come down to the Earth and Sea, becauſe theſe Chains he is now under, are not ſo cloſs and ſtrait, as they will be when that Time comes. Now he is chain'd with the *Reprobatory Sentence of Condemnation*, from which he cannot eſcape, let him ſtruggle as much as he will. He is again chain'd by the *Reſtraining Providence of God*; ſo that he can go no faſter, or further, than God pleaſeth. Moreover, tho' Satan be in Darkneſs, yet he is not confin'd to utter Darkneſs: He is miſerable, being baniſhed out of Heaven, with this cutting Aggravation, he is never to return; but he is not ſo compleatly miſerable as he will be. One ſays, "The Devil is already full of *Diſcontent*, but he is not "ſo full of *Torment* as he ſhall be; therefore it is he has ſo much Pleaſure in doing "Miſchief, eſpecially to the *People of God*."

13 And when the Dragon ſaw that he was caſt out unto the Earth, he perſecuted the Woman which brought forth the Man-child.

14 And to the Woman were given two Wings of a great Eagle, that ſhe might fly into the Wilderneſs, into her Place: Where ſhe is nouriſhed for a Time, and Times, and Half a Time, from the Face of the Serpent.

15 And the Serpent caſt out of his Mouth Water as a Flood, after the Woman: That he might cauſe her to be carried away of the Flood.

16 And the Earth helped the Woman, and the Earth opened her Mouth, and ſwallowed up the Flood which the Dragon caſt out of his Mouth.

17 And the Dragon was wroth with the Woman, and went to make War with the Remnant of her Seed, which keep the Commandments of God, and have the Teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt.

This repreſents the State and Practice of both Parties after the Conflict; where we have, 1. The Condition and Diſpoſition of the Dragon, *v.* 13. 2. The Condition of the Church, *v.* 14. 3. Satan's Stratagem againſt the Church, *v.* 15. 4. The Defeat of this Craft, *v.* 16. 5. A new Effort of the Enemy, *v.* 17.

I. We have the State of the Dragon; where we have, 1. His Condition. And, 2. His Diſpoſition.

1. The Dragon's Condtion, *He ſaw he was caſt unto the Earth*; he was ſenſible of this Pinch. This is a ſhort Recapitulation of what we had *v.* 9. the Meaning whereof is ſhortly; When *Heatheniſm* ſaw itſelf turned out of all Honour and Regard in the *Empire*, and that *Chriſtianity* had got the Aſcendant over it, theſe who were fond of their old Superſtitions, were as Bears bereaved of their Whelps, and mad with Indignation; for there is nothing goes nearer carnal Men, than to touch their *Idols*, and demo-

liſh their *unhallowed Rites*: So it was with *Micah*, Judg. xviii. 24. *Ye have taken away my gods which I have made, and the Prieſt, and what have I more?* When *Conſtantine* was advanced to the Empire, he deſtroyed all the Inſtruments of Abomination, about the Year 310, or ſhortly after: And it was not to be ſuppoſed the implacable Enemies of the *Chriſtians* would all put off their Malice at once, tho' they were obliged for their own Safety to conceal their Reſentments, being in Fear of a greater Power; but as Fire pent up becomes the hotter, ſo their Enmity burnt within them, and ſet their Heads at Work to forge new Devices, if poſſible, to undo the Church, at leaſt to diſquiet her, and gratify their own Spite.

2. The *Diſpoſition* of the Dragon flowing from this Condition, *He perſecuted the Woman which brought forth the Man-child.* Here the Attack is made upon the weakeſt, the *Woman*, for *Michael* is above the Reach of the Enemies Malice; but the Church was the Bone of Contention, and therefore they were mad againſt her. The Object of the *Dragon's* Wrath is that *Woman*, deſcribed *v.* 1. from her Appearance; and from her Production, *v.* 2, & 5. Their Exerciſe againſt her is *Perſecution.* The Word is ſometimes taken in a good Senſe, as, 1 *Tim.* vi. 11. *Follow after Righteouſneſs, Godlineſs*, &c. Sometimes in a bad, *Acts* ix. 5. *I am Jeſus whom thou perſecuteſt.* The Way to diſtinguiſh them is given by the Learned in the *Greek* thus, When it is ſpoke of a *Thing*, then it is in a good Senſe; but when of a *Perſon*, in an evil: Here it is to be ſure in a very ill Senſe, yet Expoſitors differ about the Nature of it.

Some think it is to be underſtood of growing Error that Satan had ſown in the *Church* about this Time. It is certain there were many notable Hereticks in the Church upon the Declenſion of *Paganiſm*: As *Arius*, who flouriſhed about the Year 315, was Profeſſor of Divinity at *Alexandria*, which Office gave him the greater Opportunity to diſſeminate his Errors. And it is reported by *Hilary*, that about 105 *Arian* Biſhops were got into the Church in the Space of a few Years; and in a few more, the whole *Empire* was Leavened with that *damnable Hereſy*: Their leading Principle was, to deny the *Deity of the Son.* This was long after revived by *Socinus* at the Reformation, to the great Diſturbance of the Churches. *Photinus* did wind upon the ſame Bottom with *Arius*, and was a little more expreſs in his Propoſitions; for he affirmed Chriſt was a *pure Man*, begot after the ordinary Way: This Wretch flouriſhed under the Reign of *Conſtantius*, about the Year 350. The *Emperor* himſelf was poiſoned with this Error, and raiſed terrible Perſecution in the Church, propagating the ſame. *Pelagius* was another Arch-heretick; according to ſome, he was of *Britain*; he lived about the Beginning of the fourth Century: His Errors were not ſo groſs at the Beginning, for the *Arian* Hereſy was condemned in his Time, and ſo he durſt not own theſe Errors openly, but yet took up with ſuch as did neceſſarily infer them; as advancing *Free-will above Grace*, making our own *Righteouſneſs the Ground of Juſtification*, denying *Original Sin*, &c. Our modern *Arminians* have gone in with all his Errors, and refin'd upon them, but theirs are every Whit as much againſt the Life and Power of Godlineſs as ever his were. *Neſtorius* was a fourth Ring-leader of Hereſy; he was Biſhop of *Conſtantinople*, and promoted his Errors about 40 Years after *Pelagius*, whoſe Principles he eſpouſed, adding ſome more of his own, which bordered upon the *Arian* Scheme.

Tho' theſe Errors are not downright *Paganiſm*, yet they have a great Harmony therewith, eſpecially the purer and more exalted Part of Heatheniſm, which exalted Self, and run down Revelation. As for the groſſer Part of *Gentiliſm*, viz. *Idol-worſhip*, &c. the wiſe Men among them ridiculed it, and ſaid, It was only fit for the ignorant Populace, who knew no better, and were incapable of higher Thoughts: All theſe equally did ſtrike at the Plan of Salvation through a *crucified Redeemer.*

A great many take this for the Senſe of Perſecution here, becauſe it is deſigned againſt the Woman, and not againſt the Man-child, for now the Heathen Power was curtail'd: Nor could they as formerly direct their Malice againſt the *Perſons* of Chriſtians, and therefore they attack the *Principles* of Chriſtianity, and thence they hoped to reach the Profeſſors. This indeed is a Method tends no leſs to extirpate Religion than open Hoſtilities.

Others again, by this Perſecution, mean theſe Troubles the Church was afflicted with in the Days of *Conſtantius*, *Valens*, *Julian the Apoſtate*, &c. who were all Heathen but the Name; yea, ſome of them made no Scruple to own that too. This continued to be the State of the Church for a long Time; ſome ſay 2, others more than 300 Years: This Perſecution was not always equally intenſe, for ſometimes the Church had a Breathing Reſpite betwixt Hands. I find no Difficulty to join theſe two Opinions together, and ſo we have a full View of the turbid State of the Church, after ſhe had extended her Conqueſts broad and wide.

II. The

II. The Condition of the Church, *v.* 14. I have explained a great Part of this above, *v.* 6. and it remains we now touch a little, 1. At her Furniture. And, 2. The Deſign of the whole.

1. Her Furniture, *To the Woman were given two Wings of a great Eagle.* We find oft Mention made of *Eagles* in Scripture, and their *Wings*, when God, in a prophetick Stile, is deſcanting upon his ſpecial Providence, *Exod.* xix. 4. *Ye have ſeen what I have done unto the* Egyptians, *and how I bare you on Eagles Wings.* Iſa. xl. 31. *They that wait on the Lord ſhall renew their Strength, they ſhall mount up with Wings as Eagles*: Both which ſerve to commend the Care of God towards his own People. Theſe Texts I am ſure are much older than the *Roman Empire*; and I rather incline to think the inſpired Prophet alludes to them than to the *Roman Standart*: Nay, the Context will not allow us to mean the Empire by it, which was but little friendly to the Church at this Time; for ſhe had no Peace or Security in it, but was vexed on the one Hand with Error, and on the other with Perſecution; and ſo the Senſe of it is, God would in Mercy provide Means for her Safety, which ſhould be both ſuitable and effectual. We have a plain Scripture to this Purpoſe, *Iſa.* lxiii. 9. *In all their Afflictions he was afflicted, and the Angel of his Preſence ſaved them: In his Love and in his Pity he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the Days of Old.* There is wrapt up in this Emblem, 1. That her Deliverance ſhould be ſpeedy, for the Wing of an Eagle makes great Diſpatch. 2. It would be ſufficient, and ſo it is called the Wing of a great Eagle. 3. Equal; there are two Wings, that the Motion might be the more uniform and agreeable. 4. Of a moſt unexpected Nature; for, who would dream of ſuch a Method? It is further ſaid, Theſe *Wings were given to her*, but no Mention by whom; yet it is not to be doubted but ſhe had them from *Michael* her great Champion.

2. The Deſign of the whole, That ſhe might be free and ſafe *from the Face of the Serpent.* Some think there is a *Hebraiſm* here; and that by *Face*, we are to underſtand *Anger* or *Wrath*, as, *Gen.* xxv. 1. Jacob *fled from the Face of his Brother* Eſau; which may well take Place. But ſome ſay, What Occaſion for Fear, ſeeing *Michael* had caſt out the *Dragon*? Anſwer, Tho' the Dragon was defeat, he was not deſtroyed: *Satan* was ejected as to *Heatheniſm*, but he had more to do, to hatch two *Cockatrice-eggs*, viz. the *Pope* and *Mahomet*, who were to be as little friendly to the Church as *Gentiliſm* was; and the Lord here takes Care to ſecure his Church, tho' in a Wilderneſs: But of this before.

Some think, from this may be beſt fixed the ſureſt Period of Supputation, and to know the *Apocalyptick Chronology*. They imagine the Woman fled to the Wilderneſs about the Year 390; and then, if we add the Time of her Continuance therein, *Time, Times, and Half a Time*, i. e. Three Years and an Half, or Forty two Months, or 1260 Days, it caſts up the Number 1650, the Year many thought *Antichriſt* was to fall; but we are ſure this is falſe. Beſides, this Hypotheſis (for I can call it no other) leaves us to two very great Uncertainties; 1. That the Commencement of the 1260 Years is from the Time that the *Woman* got *Wings*, which is not ſaid in the Text, for ſhe might be ſometime in the *Wilderneſs* before ſhe got the *Wings*; which ſeems plain from *v.* 6. where it is ſaid, She fled into the Wilderneſs before the War betwixt *Michael* and the *Dragon*, and upon the Back thereof ſhe might come out of the ſame: Tho' it be not ſaid in the Text, yet it is moſt ſuppoſible from her double Flight, the firſt without, the next with Wings: And it would appear the Computation of the Time is not to be from the firſt Retirement, and that ſhe was only to fulfil her Weeks after the ſecond. 2. The next Uncertainty this labours under, is, That the Dragon, in this Chapter, is the ſame with the Beaſt that roſe out of the Sea, and the ſame with the Beaſt that roſe out of the Earth; and yet, if we conſider the Prophecy, it would appear they muſt have different Significations.

III. The Dragon now finds he cannot come up with the Woman, and has Recourſe to Craft, *v.* 15. In this Stratagem we are to view, 1. The Device. 2. The Deſign of it.

1. The Device, *And the Serpent caſt out of his Mouth Waters as a Flood after the Woman.* By the Threed of this Prophecy, theſe Calamities were to be directed againſt the Church, after theſe Hereſies and Perſecutions, raiſed by Hereticks before-mentioned, were over; and ſo the Period of Time this was to fall out in, muſt be after the *Arian* and *Pelagian* Hereſies were in a ſolemn Manner condemned; and ſo it muſt be at lateſt in the fourth Century, and was to continue ſome conſiderable Space, and to make Way for the Riſe of the *Papal Antichriſt*. I remark this in the Beginning, to prevent any tedious Enquiry anent the various Gloſſes of Expoſitors of this *Flood of Waters*; And I ground it upon this Reaſon taken from the Context, This Flood muſt be after

the Perſecution raiſed by the Dragon, *v.* 13. and before the Riſe of *Antichriſt* in the next Chapter: And ſo of Neceſſity we are to underſtand ſomething elſe by theſe Waters, than the Perſecution flowing from Hereticks.

It is owned on all Hands, that *Waters* here are not be taken literally; yet does not this end the Controverſy, for in Scripture the *Prophets* have uſed this Expreſſion to many Purpoſes, too tedious to recount. That which I think ſhould determine us moſt here, is the Uſe of the Word in this Prophecy; and eſpecially that they point out *Croſſes* to the *Church* of God, *Chap.* xvii. 15. by *Waters* are meant *Peoples and Multitudes*: And we ſee here they were deſtroying Waters. Nor is the Phraſe foreign to the Scriptures in the ſame Senſe, *Pſal.* xlii. 7. *Deep calleth unto Deep at the Noiſe of thy Water-ſpouts; all thy Waves and thy Billows are gone over me.* And, *Pſal.* cxxiv. 4, 5. *Then the Waters had overwhelmed us, the Stream had gone over our Soul, the proud Waters had gone over our Soul*: Where it is plainly ſpoken of Tumults and Confuſions which threatned the *People of God.* The Word *Flood* is alſo uſed to the ſame Purpoſe, *Pſal.* xviii. 4. *The Floods of ungodly Men made me afraid.* Many other Scriptures might be adduced to juſtify this Senſe of the Word, but ſtill the Difficulty in a great Meaſure is behind, What theſe Multitudes are that happened to the Diſquiet of the Church upon the Back of theſe Hereſies and Perſecutions raiſed by them? I cannot ſee how this can be better applied, than to that prodigious Inundation of *Goths, Vandals, Huns, and other Northern Nations,* that like a Flood broke in upon the *Empire* in the fourth Century, and put all in the greateſt Confuſion: For in this Invaſion, not only was *Rome,* and theſe Provinces that lay next it, in a great Meaſure laid waſte; but they carried their Arms to *Africa,* and other remote Branches of that bulky Body: Nor could any Project be more feaſible to ruine *Chriſtianity,* than to deſtroy the Empire of *Rome,* within the Comprehenſion whereof was ſo much of the Church, that it might appear a Truth they were of one Extent, tho' not of the ſame Number. But there are further theſe few Things to be noticed from the Context concerning this Flood.

(1.) The Fountain thereof, *The Serpent's Mouth.* That the *Devil* prompted theſe Nations, yet lying in *Idolatry,* to join their Forces, and at once to break in Pieces that great Empire which had ruled ſo long over them, will not be queſtioned, when his Nature by *Apollyon* and *Abaddon* is conſidered; and eſpecially, if with the *Empire* he had any Hope to extinguiſh, or at leaſt ſtraiten the *Church of God*: Not that theſe barbarous *Multitudes* had it moſt at their Hearts to ruine the *Church of Chriſt,* which, for the moſt Part, they knew neither Good or Bad of; for their grand Deſign was to ſhake off the *Yoke* of the *Empire,* and next to that, to enrich themſelves with the Spoil, and change their natural uncultivate Soil, with the fruitful Fields of their Maſters or Neighbours: By this they would hope to recover their ancient Liberty, and revenge themſelves upon *Rome* for the many and heavy Taxes had been levied out of their Countries. So that as the Serpent at firſt by his Mouth decoyed our firſt Parents to rebel againſt God, ſo now that ſame ſlee Serpent perſwades theſe Tributary Nations to revolt from their Superiors, and ſet up for themſelves.

(2.) The Way and Manner how theſe Floods proceed, *He caſt them out*; which ſignifies great Precipitation. It was ſuddenly done, elſe the *Empire* might have been in Caſe to defend herſelf and *Capital City* from the Rage and Avarice of their Enemies: This *Satan* well knew, and therefore he ordered Matters ſo, that the Approach of theſe Multitudes did prevent the Report of their Preparations.

2. The Deſign, *That he might cauſe her to be carried away of the Flood. Satan's* main Deſign was againſt the Church; but finding he could not reach her effectually in the Empire, where tho' ſhe had many Difficulties to grapple with, yet was mercifully preſerved, he ſtirs up theſe whole Nations to deſtroy the Empire, thinking it was not poſſible the Church could eſcape. Nor are we to doubt but this has been his Method many a Time ſince, to excite Enemies to invade the Civil Liberties of a Nation, that thereby he might extinguiſh all their Religious Concerns.

IV. This helliſh Stratagem is defeat, *v.* 16. Where, 1. The Aſſiſtant. 2. The Aſſiſtance given. Never was Emblem better choſen to repreſent the Mind of the Spirit; for what could be more proper to ſuck up a Flood than the Opening of the Earth, which at once, at leaſt in a ſhort Time, would ſwallow it up? And no doubt here we are to imagine the Gap in the Earth to be betwixt the Woman and the Dragon, and ſo but little, if any, of theſe Waters could reach her. Thus the *Devil* is baulked in this moſt dangerous Concert: But we would view the Parts.

1. The Aſſiſtant, *The Earth helped the Woman.* If we take Earth, as I think in Reaſon we ſhould, for ſomewhat is fit to drink up much Water, eſpecially as here while duly diſpoſed; it will not be poſſible for us thereby to underſtand *Councils* or *Orthodox Synods,*

Synods, who never any where in Scripture come under that Deſignation. Others again, by Earth, underſtand theſe *Confederate Nations* who marched againſt the *Roman Eagle*, who in their Way, getting Acquaintance of the *Chriſtians* by their *Doctrine* and *Life*, laid aſide their Emnity, and proved rather Friends than Foes to the Church. But there is nothing in Hiſtory to juſtify this: Beſides, it croſſeth the Figure in the Text; for it was not the Waters of the Sanctuary, but the Floods of *Satan* the Earth ſwallowed. By Earth then we are to mean one of two, either the other Nations, as the *Lombards*, who ſet up for themſelves, and defeat a great many other Nations, and kept Poſſeſſion of *Italy* till the End of the ſeventh Century: Or, if this be too late, the *Oſtrogoths* that went before them, and defeat the other Nations about the End of the fifth Century, and kept Poſſeſſion of *Italy* an hundred Years; Theſe Convulſions tended not a little to the Safety of the Church: Or, if none of theſe pleaſe (for I know little but Conjectures can be offered on this Head) if by Earth we underſtand the *Wealth of Rome* and other great Cities in *Italy*, it did ſwallow up all the Thoughts of the Barbarians, who propoſed nothing to themſelves but the immenſe Booty they were to expect there, and thus diverted them from thinking to meddle with the Religion of the Empire.

2. The Aſſiſtance given, or how the Earth helped the Woman, *The Earth opened her Mouth and ſwallowed up the Flood.* I ſhall not refuſe but there may be an Alluſion here to the Deſtruction of *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, Numb. xvi. 30. by the Earth's opening of her Mouth: Yet I ſee not how we can bring the Interpretation of this from that; but the Meaning may be here, God raiſed up the *Oſtrogoths* or *Lombards* to give Check to the reſt, or did ſo order it, that the Treaſures, and other fine and valuable earthly Things, ſhould take with theſe Multitudes, and thereby divert them from what Miſchief *Satan* might deſign to work by them.

V. There is a new Effort of this grand Enemy upon the Back of this Diſappointment, *v.* 17. for he was ſo much the more enraged, as his Expectation was keen, and the Defeat unexpected. Only it may be noticed here, he ſeems to deſpair of reaching the Woman, and therefore he turns the whole of his implacable Spite againſt her Seed: Here we may notice, 1. His Diſpoſition. 2. The Deſign he next puſheth.

1. The Dragon's Diſpoſition, *He was wroth with the Woman.* He is not one whit better pleaſed with the Church than he was, tho' now ſhe was out of his Reach, *i. e.* in the Place prepared of God for her. This Expreſſion does not ſay he was not wroth with her before, but, whatever Indignation he had formerly, it was greater now: As is ſaid of *Saul*, 1 Sam. xviii. 28. *He ſaw and knew that the Lord was with* David, *and* Saul *was yet the more afraid of* David, *and became* David's *Enemy continually.*

2. The Diſcovery of this Reſentment in the Deſign he puſhed, *He went to make War with the Remnant of her Seed*, &c. There are a Variety of Thoughts about the Senſe of this: That which ſeemeth to me moſt probable is, This Verſe connects the two Chapters together; and now that *Satan* can prevail no further by *Heatheniſm*, he is brought under the Neceſſity to play another Game againſt Believers, that, if he cannot extirpate Chriſtianity, he will make the Way of its Followers as rough as he can; which indeed he effectuate with a Witneſs, in the two Beaſts mentioned in the next Chapter, for we meet with no Report of his Preparations till then. It is ſaid, He *went to make War*, i. e. he went off from the Purſuit of the Woman, to prepare for a long and continued Hoſtility: It was not to be a ſudden Flaſh, but a well digeſted and concerted Matter, to be carried on by a long Series or Courſe of Meaſures. It is added, *With the reſt of her Seed*: This is what he drives at, all that come of the Church, either in the Eaſt or Weſt. It ſeems an unneceſſary Enquiry, whether this was to be againſt Societies or particular Perſons; for that will caſt up in the next Chapter to comprehend both.

But, however that be, we have the Character of her Seed, in theſe two, 1. *They keep the Commandments of God*, i. e. they are not bound to any Articles or Regulations which are not warranted by the Word of God. 2. *They hold the Teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt*: This we explained, *Chap.* i. 2. So that pure Principles, with an holy Life, are the ſureſt Characters of a true Son of the Church; without which, all Pretenſions are bootleſs and inſignificant.

VISION III.

THIS Viſion, reckoning, as we did before, from the Place where the Apoſtle had the Manifeſtation, is the next, as in Order, ſo in Length, to the ſecond; for it reaches from the Beginning of *Chapter* xiii. to the Cloſe of *Chapter* xvi. and therein we have the Illuſtration of the third, fourth, and ſixth Seals, to the Cloſe of *Chap.* xiv. and the Emblems of the ſeven Vials, in the other two Chapters.

CHAP. XIII.

THIS Chapter contains the Illuſtration of the third and fourth Seals, under new Emblems, the one to *v.* 11. the other in the reſt; yet ſo as to take in ſomething of the firſt Emblem.

The new Emblem of the third Seal, we have in the firſt 10 Verſes; where we have theſe Parts, after an Account of the Theatre, (1.) A full Deſcription of this Monſter, to near the Cloſe of *v.* 2. (2.) The Condition of this Beaſt, in the reſt of *v.* 2. (3.) A particular Hiſtory of the moſt notable Events concerning this Beaſt, to *v.* 9. (4.) The Concluſion of this Part of the Viſion in a practical Way.

I ſhall not conſume Time to diſprove that Notion ſome have adopted, That the *Dragon* in the former Chapter, and this monſtrous *Beaſt* here, are one and the ſame: For, we may as well ſay, that the ſecond and third Seals are the ſame, which I know none maintains; Beſides, the ſeveral Deſcriptions plainly prove, that they are not the ſame, but different; this will caſt up as we go along. And, in the laſt Place, it is certainly diverſe from the *Dragon*, becauſe he ſucceeded the Dragon both in his *Throne* and *Authority*, v. 12. So that he cannot be the ſame.

1 And I ſtood upon the Sand of the Sea, ——

He had all the ſecond Viſion in Heaven, but here he is brought to the *Sea-ſhore*, no doubt the Shore of that Sea ſurrounds the Iſle *Patmos*, that he might the more accurately notice the Viſion, which he could not have done with ſo much Advantage, had he been any where elſe. Had he been in a Valley, the Hills would have obſtructed his Sight; had he been on ſome high Mountain, the Diſtance would have been ſo great, that he could not have diſtinct and clear Obſervations: But he is brought to the Shore (we know not how, nor may we offer Conjectures) that he might notice all that paſt; this is what I take to be the main Thing deſigned here. Some indeed fiſh a great many Myſteries out of this Sand, and *John*'s Poſture on it; but, in regard they have more of Curioſity, than Solidity, I paſs them.

Some cloſe the preceeding Chapter with this Clauſe, and make it run in the third Perſon, *And he ſtood*, &c. and underſtand it of the *Dragon*, viz. That he having gone to make War with the Remnant of the Woman's Seed, ſtood upon the Shore, to conjure up that ugly Monſter after-deſcribed. I ſhall own, *Satan* had a very great Hand in raiſing this Beaſt; but ſtill, 'tis a making too homely with the Oracles of Truth: Nor will it mend the Matter, that ſome Copies read it in the *third Perſon*, when it is owned by all, that the moſt approved Copies read it in the *firſt Perſon*, and but a very few otherwiſe.

1 — And ſaw a Beaſt riſe up out of the Sea, ——

It appears reaſonable we believe the ſame Perſon that ſtood upon the Sand, ſaw this Viſion. Now, it is owned by all, that *John* had the Viſion; and therefore I preſume, we muſt allow it to be *John* that was on the *Sand*, that he might ſee. That I may in a Word or two expede this Preliminary alſo, I notice in it, 1. The general Character of this Emblem. 2. Whence he came. 3. How he came. 4. The Evidence of all.

1. The general Character of this Emblem, a *Beaſt*. We had the ſame Word before, *Chap.* xi. 7. *The Beaſt that aſcendeth out of the Bottomleſs Pit.* Many contend it is the ſame Beaſt in both Places; but there I proved that Beaſt to comprehend the *Dragon*, and the two *Beaſts* in this Chapter; ſo that this will but make the third Part of that Beaſt.

Beaſt. Others again ſay, This *Beaſt* is the ſame with the fourth Beaſt mentioned by *Daniel*, Chap. vii. I own, they agree in many Things; But any who will diligently compare them, will find they alſo differ in other Things; but it is an indiſputable Truth, that Likeneſs will not infer Sameneſs: Beſides, all the Enemies of God's People muſt be like other in ſome Things, yet that will not prove the Church has no more Enemies to grapple with but one. But, if the Queſtion be put, Whether the Prophet *Daniel* has any Thing about *Papal Antichriſt*? I ſhall not be ſtiff to deny, nor is it our preſent Buſineſs to enquire; we may get ſome Touches of his Prophecy afterwards.

2. We have the Place whence he came, *Out of the Sea.* The ſame is ſaid of all *Daniel*'s four Beaſts, *Dan.* vii. 2, 3. *They came out of the Sea*: By Sea, a great many underſtand Confuſions and Reelings, as it was in *Daniel*'s Viſion, *The four Winds ſtrove upon the Sea.* No doubt, but Monſters of Wickedneſs riſe from extraordinary Commotions: And that this ſhould be the Senſe of *Daniel*, is plain; for in that ſame Chapter, *v.* 17. it is ſaid, *Theſe four Beaſts are four Kings, which ſhall riſe out of the Earth.* Satan loves to fiſh in troubled Waters: Yet I ſee not how we can get much Light from *Daniel* in this Place, in regard he ſpeaks of the Sea and the Earth as the ſame, the one in a Viſion, *Dan.* vii. 2. the other was by Interpretation, without any Viſion or Emblem; whereas here we have a Viſion of the *Sea* in this, and of the Earth, *v.* 11. ſo that we cannot allow the one to be the Interpretation of the other: It will do better then, that by Sea we underſtand *Europe*, as we endeavoured to prove, *Chap.* x. 2. and ſo the Senſe is, *The Beaſt roſe up out of* Europe.

3. The Way and Manner, *He did riſe up.* The Word ſignifies to climb, as People do a Stair or Ladder, one Step after another; *i. e.* he mounted up gradually. The *Papacy* came not to its Height at once, but by many leiſurely Steps; So, ſome think, it took no leſs than 200 Years after the *Pope* had appeared in the World as univerſal *Biſhop*, before that Myſtery of Iniquity came to its Height. This makes the great Difficulty to fix upon the preciſe Period, whence we are to date the *Birth-day* of that *Limb of Antichriſt*; ſome making it about the Beginning or Middle of the fifth Century; others, not till about the End of the ſeventh; and ſome pitch betwixt the two, as others about the eighth.

4. The Evidence, *I ſaw.* *John* ſaw it in the Viſion, it was revealed to him by the ſure Word of Prophecy; yea, and God honoured others to ſee it, whileſt the Papal Hierarchy was mounting, and damnable Errors introducing, together with their idolatrous Worſhip; and theſe did remonſtrate againſt it, as we ſhall hear afterwards.

1 —— Having ſeven Heads and ten Horns, and upon his Horns ten Crowns, and upon his Heads the Name of Blaſphemy.

2 And the Beaſt which I ſaw was like unto a Leopard, and his Feet as the Feet of a Bear, and his Mouth as the Mouth of a Lion: ——

Here we have a particular Deſcription of this Monſter; where, it is plain, in ſome Things he is like, in others unlike the Dragon: The Particulars are, 1. As to his Heads. 2. His Horns. 3. His Name. 4. His Reſemblance. Of which we can only give ſome Hints now.

1. This Beaſt is ſaid to have *ſeven Heads*; and theſe, *Chap.* xvii. are called ſeven Kings: We muſt wave the Conſideration of them till we come to that Place, as was told, *Chap.* xii. 2. for neither of theſe Paſſages can be fairly underſtood till we come thither.

2. This Beaſt had *ten Horns, and Crowns on his Horns.* I gave the general Senſe of *Horns* in Scripture, *Chap.* xi. 3. and *Chap.* v. 6. There is this Difference betwixt the Horns of the *Dragon*, and this *Beaſt*, that theſe Horns are *crowned*, i. e. veſted with Sovereignty; which they were not under the Dragon, for they did not obtain it till the *Pope's* Time, and therefore it is ſaid, *Chap.* xvii. 12. *Who have not as yet received Kingdoms*: For they were not to be poſſeſſed of them, till both the Beaſts apppeared. Of this more on *Chap.* xvii.

3. His Names, *Upon his Head the Name* [Orig. Names] *of Blaſphemy.* Satan always aped God, and rival'd him in his Ordinances; ſo God ordered the *Levitical* High Prieſt, *Exod.* xxviii. 36. to have a Mitre with an Inſcription on it engraven, *Holineſs unto the Lord* After the ſame Manner, this *Beaſt* hath not one, but many Names, and they are all of *Blaſphemy* upon, his Head; as we may ſee more plainly, *Chap.* xvii. 5. In general, the Meaning is, All the notable Enemies of God have uſurped great and glorious Titles: For *Rome Heathen*, tho' the whole Empire could not make one Flie, yet they made gods; and none might have Divine Honours paid them, whom the *Senate*

and Emperor did not enroll them among the gods. And what better is *Antichriſtian Rome*, who arrogate to themſelves the Power of making Saints, appointing Days for their Honour, and particular Acts of Worſhip to be paid them? There are reckoned by the Learned three Sorts of Idolatry, and all of them to be found on the Head of the Papacy, 1. When any Thing is aſcribed to God unworthy of him; thus the Heathen aſcribed Falſhood and Uncleanneſs, *&c.* to their gods: The Papiſts, by their *Scientia media*, make him ignorant, *&c.* 2. When ſome of his glorious Perfections are denied, as his Holineſs, Juſtice, *&c.* this was evident in the Heathen, who made the gods unclean like Goats, and changeable like the Wind: The Papiſts alſo imagine, God will admit the greateſt Sinner to Heaven without Faith and Repentance, upon the Pope's Remiſſion, and the Prieſt's Maſſes. 3. When what is peculiar to the *Godhead*, or any of the glorious Perſons thereof, is aſcribed unto Man; this was common among the Heathen, who had their tutelary gods taken from among Men, *&c.* In which they are are far outdone by the Papiſts, who have aſcribed to their *Popes* the Power of pardoning Sin, yea, diſpenſing with the greateſt of Sins, as Murder, Inceſt, *&c.* they canonize Saints, aſcribe Divine Perfections to them, and order Divine Honours to be done them. So that, in all theſe, and many other Things we will afterwards hear of, *Popery* is branded with the Name or *Names of Blaſphemy*.

4. The Reſemblance of this Beaſt, whereby it will appear it is a moſt formidable Monſter: He is like in general to a *Leopard*, for the moſt Part of him; his *Feet* are like the *Feet of a Bear*, and his Mouth like Mouth of a *Lion*. Into all which we ſhall ſhortly enquire, that we may come to the further Knowledge of him.

(1.) In general, he is compared unto a *Leopard*, *The Beaſt which I ſaw was like unto a Leopard*. This is *Daniel's* Emblem of the *Grecian* Monarchy, *Dan.* vii. 6. here *John* uſes it to figure the *Papal* Power. We ſhall wave all advanced by Naturaliſts about this Beaſt, as making little to the Purpoſe; and only notice what the Scripture ſaith thereof, in theſe few Things; 1. It is a Beaſt that haunts the higheſt Mountains for its Abode, *Song* iv. 8. *From the Mountains of the Leopards*: Thus the *Pope* exalts himſelf high, even *above all that is called God*. 2. It is a moſt watchful Creature, and all for Miſchief; thence it is that it haunts high Places for the further View, *Jer.* v. 6. *A Leopard ſhall watch over the Cities; every One that goeth out thence, ſhall be torn in Pieces*. It is an Emblem of the Lord's revengeful Obſervation of Sinners, *Hoſ.* xiii. 7. *As a Leopard by the Way, will I obſerve them*. This is a Figure of the wicked and deſtructive Policy of *Rome*. 3. It is *variouſly ſpotted*, Jer. xiii. 23. *Can the Leopard change his Spots?* Whether this be underſtood of Blemiſhes, or Diverſity, nothing can better agree to *Rome*; for, the firſt, All Abominations are found there, which a modeſt Perſon would be more aſhamed to mention, than they are to commit; for the diſſimular Parts, the great Variety of their unſcriptural Orders are a plain Interpretation. 4. It is noted for *Swiftneſs*, Hab. i. 8. *Their Horſes are ſwifter than Leopards*. Some think, the Velocity of the *Grecian* Expedition is pointed at by the Swiftneſs of this Creature, and we will find the ſame in a great Meaſure may be ſaid for *Rome*. 5. It is noted as a moſt fierce and cruel Beaſt, *Iſa.* xi. 6. *The Leopard ſhall ly down with the Kid*; i. e. the moſt fierce and moſt mild together: We will find how agreeable this is to *Rome*, when we come to *v.* 7. of this Chapter.

(2.) This Beaſt is compared to a *Bear* in his *Feet*, *His Feet were as the Feet of a Bear*. *Daniel's* ſecond Beaſt is ſaid to be like a *Bear*, Dan. vii. 5. and is the Emblem of the *Perſian* Empire: But in *Daniel* the Reſemblance was to the whole Beaſt, here only to his Feet; and therefore we are to confine our Analogy to that Part. The Feet of a *Bear* then, are, 1. Very ſtrong, yea, his greateſt Strength lieth in his Feet and Legs: It is thought to be ſtronger than the Lion, *Amos* v. 19. *As if a Man did flee from a Lion, and a Bear met him*; i. e. to flee from a leſs, and fall into a greater Hazard. This may point at the Strength of Antichriſtian Papal *Rome*, which we are ſure will continue the Space of 1260 Years. 2. His Feet are ſmooth and ſoft, yet fenced with formidable Nails, and therefore compared to the Paw of a Lion, 1 *Sam.* xvii. 37. *He delivered me out of the Paw of the Lion, and the Bear*: So Popery conceals his long Talons, among his long and ſoft Pretenſions; yet it is not the further from Cruelty. 3. He uſeth his Paw, as Men do their Hands, to grip or hold any Thing, as is not obſcurely inſinuate in the laſt Quotation; ſo it is with Popery, gripping faſt whatever they can catch.

(3.) This Beaſt is compared to a *Lion* in his *Mouth*, *His Mouth as the Mouth of a Lion*. *Daniel's* firſt Beaſt is compared to a *Lion*, Dan. vii. 4. this he gave as the Emblem of the *Aſſyrian* or *Chaldean* Empire. Here this Beaſt is only likened to the Lion in his Mouth, where the greateſt of that Creature's Strength lieth. We purſue the Likeneſs in theſe few, 1. The Mouth of the Lion is moſt formidable; the reſtleſs

leſs and impatient Fury of the Wicked is compared to the Gaping of a Lion, *Pſal.* xxii. 13. *They gaped upon me with their Mouths as a Lion.* So Papiſts are ſtill belching out terrible Accuſations againſt the *People of God*, and thereby diſcover their Inclinations to deſtroy them. 2. The *Lion's* Mouth ſends forth hideous Roarings; the Threats of oppreſſing Tyrants are compared *to the Roaring of a Lion* Prov. xxviii. 15. ſo the *Popes* do roar out their Curſes againſt the Flock of Chriſt. 3. The Mouth of the *Lion* is fortified with deſtructive Teeth: The furious Force of an inveterate Enemy is figured by them, *Joel* i. 6. *A Nation is come up upon my Land, ſtrong, and without Number; whoſe Teeth are the Teeth of a Lion, and he hath the Cheek-Teeth of a great Lion.* This is no leſs verified of the *Papacy*, as the Maſſacres of *Paris* and *Ireland*, the *Marian* Perſecution in *England*, &c. do ſufficiently prove.

2 —— And the Dragon gave him his Power, and his Seat, and great Authority.

Here we have the State and Condition of the Beaſt, and how he came by it: Becauſe both theſe give conſiderable Light in this Prophecy, I ſhall conſider them particularly, and apply as I go along.

I. The Condition of this Beaſt, in theſe three, *Power*, a *Seat*, and *great Authority*; all which, it is ſaid, he had from the *Dragon*, i. e. the *Heathen Governors*, as acted by Satan againſt the Church.

1. The firſt Step of his Condition is *Power*, and this is ſaid to be the *Dragon's* Power, and transferred to this Beaſt. We cannot better come to the Knowledge of this, than to enquire what Power the Dragon had, or was exerciſed by *Heathen Rome*; and to be ſure, we muſt diſtinguiſh it from Regal Dignity, which we have mentioned as the laſt of the three. Some therefore underſtand this of *Military Forces*, which were brought over to the Intereſt of this Beaſt: But this is croſſed by both Matter of Fact, and the Force of the Word; for the firſt, The Army never left the Heathen Emperors to ſet up a Pope, nor did theſe Rulers employ their Arms this Way: Nay, further, the *Pope* did not riſe by the Sword, as did *Mahomet*. Again, the Force of the Word claſheth with this; for δύναμις ſignifies rather an inherent Vertue, than external Force, and points at an internal and mental Excellency: So is it taken, *Luke* xxiv. 29. *Till ye be endued with Power from on high*; which is underſtood not of Acceſſion of Numbers to the Apoſtles, but of a Sufficiency for their Work: And again, *Luke* ix. 1. *He gave them Power and Authority over all Diſeaſes*, i. e. a Faculty and Capacity for the Curing of them: And ſo here we are to underſtand it of their Sagacity, and mental Sufficiency: It is without all Debate, the *Romans* were the moſt polite and cunning Nation in the World, and thereby they both raiſed and continued their Nation for many Ages. It was commonly ſaid, The *Romans* conquered more Nations by their Maxims of *Policy* well applied, than by the Force of their *Sword*. I ſhall touch at a few of them, and ſee whether the *Pope* has followed the Copy cloſly, or not.

(1.) The firſt Founders of *Rome*, about 700 Years before Chriſt, arrogate to themſelves great Names. Thus *Romulus* gave out himſelf to be the Son of *Mars*, the god of War; whereby he amuſed the People, and heightned his own Character, and, by both, gain'd many Followers: This took the better, that it fell out in a moſt ignorant and barbarous Period of the World. So it was with the Pope; for he firſt ſet up his Head obſervably, when the whole Empire was in the utmoſt Confuſion, when black Ignorance had overſpread the World; for the *Goths* and *Vandals*, with others, had ranged *Europe*, yea, and a great Part of *Aſia*, for a long Tract of Years, by which *Schools* were diſſipate, Miniſters baniſhed, the then grown Generation were waſted by the Sword and Age, and the growing ſprung up in groſs Ignorance. After this Confuſion, and before the Church had Acceſs to purge herſelf from Errors, and the Dregs of Idolatry, that Inundation left behind them, the *Biſhop* of *Rome* gave out himſelf to be the Succeſſor of the Apoſtle *Peter*, yea, and the *Vicar* of Chriſt upon Earth; and thus he deceived the People, yea, and Princes too, and got himſelf admired of all. Thus *Satan* taught him to nick the Opportunity.

(2.) It was a notable Step of the *Roman* Conduct, That all the Nations they conquered, they ſo encouraged, that they lived better and more eaſily under them, than their former natural Princes; their Yoke being eaſy, the People had no Ground to complain, but contribute their Aſſiſtance to ſupport that Government was ſo kind to them. This is a Step of Policy was nicely obſerved by the Popes; for, wherever he got Footing, he was careful to provide the Miniſters much better than their own Princes ever did: Thus we read, that the Emperor expreſſed his Kindneſs to an ambitious Biſhop,

that thwarted the Pope's Intereſt, by ſetting him over ſeven Provinces; The Pope thinking how ſerviceable ſuch a Man might be, if gained to his Intereſt, created him Archbiſhop, and gave him ſeventeen Provinces to command by his Advice: And, by theſe Methods, an ignorant, covetous and ambitious Miniſtry were debauched.

(3.) The *Romans* were very careful to pleaſe their People with *Shows*, *Plays*, and other *Diverſions* ſuitable to their Inclinations. In this the *Pope* is not behind them; for their *Jubilees*, *Proceſſions*, and a great many unſanctified Diverſions, fit to pleaſe a carnal Temper, have from Time to Time been invented and practiſed by them.

(4.) The *Romans* were throng in building *Temples* through the ſeveral Parts of their Empire, which they adorned, and dedicate ſome to one Idol, and ſome to another, as beſt pleaſed the ſeveral Inhabitants: And in many of theſe were Oracles, whence they made the curious People think they might have the Knowledge of Things to come. The *Pope* is no Stranger to this black Art, but has faithfully followed the *Dragon*, and outdone him: For tho' at firſt they only begun with *Relicks* to hatch Superſtition, yet afterwards their Churches were better provided with *Images* and *Pictures* than any Heathen Temple ever was; yea, and pretended alſo to have Reſponſes given, and Miracles wrought. The Heathens alſo made all their Religion ly in a pompous Train of inſignificant Rites: Theſe alſo are to be found under *Popery*; and in both they are called Myſteries.

(5.) The *Romans* were ſure to plant *Colonies* in all the Parts of their Empire: Theſe being perfectly attached to their Intereſt, not only kept the Counties under their Authority, but alſo proved Nurſeries, whence, as Occaſion ſerved, they recruited their Armies with well-diſciplin'd Men. And how could the *Pope* better imitate this, than by erecting *Monaſtries*, *Colleges*, &c. and planting them with Perſons after his own Heart, and fitted to train up others in the ſame Faith? All theſe are for the Support of that Myſtery of Iniquity: So that one of the *Popes* had it to boaſt, He had at his Devotion *Forty four thouſand Monaſtries*, well furniſhed with Perſons fit for his Service, which would amount to more than all the Chriſtian Princes were able to raiſe.

(6.) The *Romans* were careful to provide all their Provinces with *Exarchs*, *Deputies*, and other Rulers, who were well provided in their ſeveral Governments; yet from all of them lay an Appeal to the Senate or *Ceſar*: Which is imitate in the *Papal Monarchy*; for he has *Cardinals*, *Patriarchs*, *Arch-biſhops*, &c. to an infinite Number, canton'd wherever his Power reaches; theſe conſume the Wealth of their ſeveral Precincts: From all theſe ly an Appeal to the *Pope* and his Conclave. So that it is evident the *Beaſt* has got the *Power of the Dragon*.

2. The next Step of the Beaſt's State is, *He got the Seat* (θρονος) *of the Dragon*. This is not the only Place where I find this Word rendered *Seat*: Ordinarily indeed it is turned *Throne*, which I own makes the Senſe every whit as obſcure; For tho', in the Propriety of Speech, a *Throne* ſignifies a *Royal Seat*, yet ſometimes by a *Metonomy* it ſignifies *Government*, Acts ii. 30. *He would raiſe up Chriſt to ſit upon his Throne*. Again, *Rev.* xvi. 10. *The fifth Angel poured out his Vial upon the Seat of the Beaſt*. Here it is generally thought to ſignify the City of *Rome* ſtrictly taken, becauſe the next Word *Authority* takes in Sovereignty, and it ſeems juſt we ſhould diſtinguiſh betwixt them. But this I cannot yield to, for theſe Reaſons, 1. The *Captital City* is never called the Throne, becauſe the Court may remove from one Place to another; and yet none will ſay, That there is no Throne, becauſe a Prince does not confine himſelf to one City; it is the Sovereignty and Royal Preſence that conſtitutes the *Court* or *Throne*, wherever that is. 2. Authority points at the Extent of the Juriſdiction, as we will afterwards ſee, and is diſtinct from the Throne, which ſeems to point at the Nature and Manner of the Government; and ſo the Meaning is, As the *Beaſt* had raiſed his Kingdom by the ſame Maxims with the *Dragon*, ſo he managed after the ſame Manner, and over the ſame People. Yet I ſhall not exclude the City of *Rome* from a Share in the Comprehenſions of this Word: But then, whichever Way we take it, it will perplex the Solution of one of the grand Apocalyptick Queſtions, *viz. When the Pope aroſe?* For it is certain he had *Rome* before his Sovereignty was great. But the beſt Method I can think of is, to ſubjoin a few Remarks from the beſt approven Hiſtories of theſe Times.

(1.) In the Year 513, or thereby, Pope *Hormiſdas* did ſeize the City of *Rome*, becauſe the Emperor *Anaſtaſius* kept his Reſidence at *Conſtantinople*, according to the Practice of ſeverals of his Predeceſſors, after *Theodoſius* had ſackt *Rome*, upon a Diſobligation; whereupon the Citizens were much alienated from the Emperor and his Family: This no doubt made the People more inclinable to put themſelves under the Eccleſiaſtick rather than the Civil Government, becauſe they had felt much more Harm in their Perſons and Eſtates from the latter than the former. Beſides, *Hormiſdas* was

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a great Enemy to the *Arians*, whom the *Emperor* protected, and at the ſame Time Perſecuted the Orthodox: This brought many of them to *Rome*, where they were kindly received of the Pope: In Return they ſubmitted themſelves to him as their Sovereign, and owned him as *Univerſal Biſhop*; but the Emperor deſpiſed him, and ſupported the Biſhop of *Conſtantinople* in Oppoſition to him. Thus Matters continued for ſome Time in no ſmall Confuſion betwixt theſe two proud Biſhops, the Emperor all the while preferring the Biſhop of *New* to the Biſhop of *Old Rome*; whereupon the Pope took Protection from the *Gothiſh* Kings; who eſpouſed his Quarrel againſt the Emperor of the Eaſt. Thus Matters laſted till the Beginning of the ſixth Century.

(2.) Shortly after, *i. e.* about the Year 606, or 608, Pope *Boneface* III. joined Iſſue with *Phocas*, who murdered his Maſter Emperor *Maurice*, and after, by his own Aſſociates, and the Pope's Aſſiſtance, was made Emperor; which ſo pleaſed him, that he enacted none ſhould be Univerſal Biſhop but the Biſhop of *Rome*, which *Boneface* took care to have eſtabliſhed in a Council of 70 Biſhops: And from that Time, the utmoſt Number of the Conclave is to be the ſame, and were afterwards deſigned *Cardinals*; yet for ſome conſiderable Time they had Confirmation in the Papal Chair from the Emperor, and paid Vaſſalage to him for *Rome*, and what elſe he had. Here we may remark, as the Pope got his Advancement after the moſt iniquous Method, ſo he uſed it to the worſt of Purpoſes.

(3.) In the Reign of Emperor *Juſtinian*, *Bennet* II. procured from the Emperor a Diſcharge of the Feu-duty paid by the Biſhop of *Rome* for ever; this in the Year 684: And further, obtained a Diſcharge of the Pope's ſeeking or expecting *Confirmation* from the Emperor or his *Exarchs*, in all Time coming. Some tell us, This was ſought, but not granted; which in my Opinion is moſt probable, becauſe long after this, I find the Emperors handling his pretended Holineſs after a homely Manner, and many Bickerings were betwixt the Popes and Emperors.

(4.) We find *Charles* the Great, about the Beginning of the ninth Century, *i. e.* about the 800, and two or three Years after, was applied to by Pope *Leo* III. who did him Homage at firſt; but that Pope having humoured his Vanity, by declaring him Emperor of the Weſt, got a Gift of Independence from the Emperor. This I take to be the firſt clear Diſcharge given by an Emperor to the Pope; and conſequently this is the firſt Time we can in a proper Senſe ſay, The Beaſt got the Dragon's Seat: And yet, even here, it was ſtipulate by by them, That the Pope ſhould not be choſen without the Conſent of the Imperial Will, which was ſtill a Badge of Slavery; But at the laſt his Son *Lewis*, in a moſt abſolute Manner, renounced that Privilege, and to boot, owned the Pope's Juriſdiction over himſelf and the whole Empire: This, as far as I can find from Hiſtory, happened in the Year 817. Some indeed place his getting of the Throne as above ſaid.

From all that is ſaid, I only crave Leave to obſerve how uncertain and raſh a Matter it is, to prop a Time when this Beaſt will fall, when we cannot ſo much as get a fixed Period to count from. Theſe I have remarked are the moſt notable Increaſes of the *Romiſh* Idolatry and Tyranny, and yet we know not which of them to reckon from; only we are ſure we cannot count from all of them: But, count how we will, the Time of his Fall is not come. If we add 1260 Years, the Time of the Continuance of *Romiſh Idolatry*, to the Year of Pope *Hormiſdas* his ſeizing *Rome* 513, it will caſt up to be 1773. If we reckon from *Boneface* III. in the Year 606, it will fall in with 1866. If from *Bennet* II. in the Year 684, it will caſt up the Year 1945. And if we count from the Reign of *Charles* the Great, in the Year 800, then the Pope is not to fall till the Year 2060. But if from the Time of *Lewis*, it will caſt it 17 Years further, and fall in with the Year 2077. From all theſe, it is plain there is a Time fixed for the Pope's Downfall: And from each of theſe, they who are fond to determine may have Ground for Conjectures, except the firſt, becauſe it is not very probable ſo many great Events will fall out in the Space of fifty Years: And yet I will not, for the Reaſons before-given, aver that any of theſe hit the Truth; tho' I am pretty confident more is to be ſaid for any of theſe Three or Four, than for any of the other Opinions, who fix the Period they count from ſooner than any of theſe. We have enough here to ground our Faith in the Truth of the Thing, to ſtrengthen our Hope of it, and enliven our Fervour in Prayer for it; but God gives no Fodder for our Curioſity in his Word, ſeeing that can hardly be without Sin.

3. The laſt Step of the Beaſt's State is, he had *great Authority*. This is a reſpective Expreſſion, for there may be a Power without Authority, *i. e.* a Perſon may be capable to govern, and yet never have Occaſion for it; but we no ſooner hear of Authority, but immediately we think of Subjects, and ſo Authority and Juriſdiction are reciprocal Terms. It is not ſaid the *Beaſt* got the *Dragon's Authority*, as he had his *Power* and his

Seat: Nor indeed had he, for the Eaſtern Parts of the *Dragon's* Juriſdiction fell to another Beaſt: Neither the Word *Authority* or *Juriſdiction* plead for the Equity of it, but only that it was owned as ſuch, and the Beaſt exerciſed it as if it had been juſt. This Authority is called *Great*, yea, it grew greater in many Reſpects than ever the Dragon's was; for he made it extend to both Sides of the World, to the Soul as well as the Body, to Eternity as well as Time; and therefore, amongſt other of his blaſphemous Titles, he is called *King of Kings*, and *Lord of Lords*, &c. Such is his Impudence to pretend to this, and ſuch was the Stupidity of the World to believe this; yea, ſome live in the Faith of it to this Day.

II. How the Beaſt came by all theſe, *The Dragon gave him them.* We are under no Neceſſity here to underſtand any formal Surrender made by the one to the other; yet we will find a material, if not a formal, Upgiving of them, and in one or all of theſe Methods; 1. The Heathen Powers may be ſaid to give them, in ſo far as they abandoned them, and left this Beaſt to the peaceable Poſſeſſion of them. 2. The Devil, that acted the Heathen Emperors, would have a very active Hand this Way; nor would he leave any Stone unmoved, by which he might promote the Intereſt of this darling Son, whom he hop'd might in Time contribute as much to the Standing of his Kingdom as ever the *Dragon* did. 3. The Heathen themſelves ſeeing ſuch a great Affinity betwixt *Gentiliſm* and *Popery*, yea, that the *Conclave* had outdone the *Senate* in all the myſterious Rites of their Idolatry, would be very ready to join their helping Hand, and advance the Work as far and faſt as they could. And finally, The Chriſtian Emperors had no ſmall Share in this Acceſſion of Power, *&c.* to the Pope; partly by moulding the Chriſtian Church after the Form of their Civil Government, hence came in the *Hierarchy*; and partly by their profuſe Liberality, upon which, ſome ſay, A Voice was heard from Heaven, ſaying, *Hodie venenum effuſum eſt in Eccleſiam*, This Day the Church is Poiſoned. But whether the Voice came from Heaven or not, I am not to enquire; but ſure I am it is true. This was in *Conſtantine's* Time, about the Year 309, or ſhortly after. Upon the Back of which there were ſtill new Additions, till the Time of *Phocas*, about the 600; at which Time, the Pope being well fledged, begun to ſet up for himſelf, and vie with the Emperors for every Thing that was great.

Having ſeen the Production and State of this *Beaſt*, we are next to view the Hiſtory of his Life in ſeveral very notable Events; 1. A terrible Diſaſter, and the Remedy thereof, *v.* 3. 2. The Exaltation of the Beaſt in the Eyes of the World, *v.* 4. 3. The Pride and Arrogance of this Beaſt, and the Continuance of his ſwollen Inſolence, *v.* 5, 6. 4. His Succeſs in warlick Expeditions, and the Regard that concilitate him, *v.* 7, 8.

3 And I ſaw one of his Heads as it were wounded to Death, and his deadly Wound was healed: And all the World wondered after the Beaſt.

In this we have to view, 1. The Miſery of this Beaſt. 2. The Recovery therefrom. 3. The Conſequent thereof.

I. The Miſery or Diſaſter of this Beaſt, *I ſaw one of his Heads as it were wounded to Death.* When it is ſaid, *John* ſaw, it is to be meant of what was revealed to him in the Emblem; for the Thing ſignified did not appear in the World ſome Hundreds of Years after. There are many Difficulties about this, which I ſhall endeavour to clear, in Anſwer to a few Queſtions.

Queſt. 1. When was this mortal Wound given?

Anſw. Some ſay, It was when *Theodoſius* divided the Empire betwixt his two Sons, *Anno* 408; but this was before the Beaſt roſe: For tho' the Biſhop of *Rome* was great at that Time, yet *Theodoſius* had little Regard to *Rome*, or any Thing in it; and beſides, that Diviſion was the Cauſe, at leaſt Occaſion, of the Ruin of the *Roman* Empire: Nor had it ever Peace till it was demoliſhed by the *Goths*, &c. and ſo this Wound was never healed. Others underſtand it of the Invaſion of the *Saracens*, in the ſeventh Century, when they plundered *Rome*, and ravaged a great Part of the Empire: But then theſe learned Men underſtand nothing by the *ſeven Heads*, but the *ſeven Hills* upon which *Rome* ſtood; and the demoliſhing of one of them is neceſſarily to be the *deadly Wound*, and the repairing or rebuilding thereof its *Healing*: So that if it be found theſe Hills are not the Heads, this Thought muſt fall to the Ground. Others again think this mortal Wound was given at the *Reformation.* I own that was a Wound, and I hope a mortal one too, but ſuch as is not yet healed, and we have Reaſon to pray

pray it never may: But this is too far down; nor can it have any Footing, but by transposing the Text, which is dangerous. We are then to constitute the Time of this *Wound* shortly after the *Rise* of the Beast, and this will be several Hundreds of Years before the *Reformation*.

Quest. 2. What Head was wounded?

Answ. We read, the Beast had *seven Heads*; some say it was the first, but without Ground, seeing it is said indefinitely, *one of the Heads*. But before we can be satisfied as to this Question, we would first know, what is to be understood by these Heads? Some tell us, They are the seven Mountains on which *Rome* was built: But, if *Rome* did not imploy these seven Hills when Antichrist rose, then there is no Room for this. *Suetonius* tells, In *Nero*'s Time, *Rome* was 50 Miles in Compass; but this is also contradicted: However it is owned by all, that then it stood upon *seven Hills*; but by the intestine Jars it suffered much, so that in *Honorius*'s Time, in the Beginning of the fifth Century, it was scarce 21 Miles in Circuit, and employed only five of these Hills. In this Time the *Goths* destroyed it, and left not the Half of it standing; and ever after, there is not enough of the City to cover *three* of these Hills; and so, whatever deadly Wound it met with, was never healed. Others, again, by these *Heads*, understand the seven Sorts of Government *Rome* had from its Foundation, whereof five were fallen, and the sixth was in Being, *viz.* the Imperial Government, and so they would have the Wound to be in that Head: It received a mortal Wound by the Northern Nations, and was healed again, when *Charles* the Great was made Emperor. This seems to tell pretty well; but we would consider, that before this Time, the Empire was broken to Pieces; for the *Saracens* possessed all in *Asia*, *Egypt*, and other Places; the Emperors of the East had all *Greece*, and the Countries about *Constantinople*; a great many of the Northern and Western Nations were disjoined from the Empire: So that the Pope's making *Charles* Emperor of the West, did not heal that Wound; It was rather the Setting up of a new and small Empire in Place of the great and old one. But, besides, if all the several Sorts of Government ever *Rome* was under, shall be found but one of the seven Heads, then this Opinion also falls. I shall therefore now suppose, and prove on *Chap.* xvii. that all these Heads were fallen, even the sixth, yea and the seventh also, before the *Papacy* rose out of the *Sea*, and never any of them recovered of their mortal Wound; and consequently this Head that was wounded, was no other but the *Papacy* it self: And, I think, the Context proves it, for it was that Beast all the World wondred after, who was worshipped, who was to continue 42 Months, who made War with the Saints, and who was cotemporary with the second Beast, and whom the second Beast caused to be worshipped.

Quest. 3. What then was that mortal Wound Popery received after its first Appearance in the World?

Answ. The Text says, *It was as it were wounded to Death*; or slaughtered to Death, which says it was a very threatning Blow, and seem'd to bode the utter Extirpation thereof. This *Head* must be that which must constitute him the *Beast*; and we will find that to be the damnable Errors in Doctrine, Worship and Government, that abounded under Popery, which was very notable about the Beginning of the seventh Century, when the Emperor declared the Pope *Universal Bishop*, by a Freehold; kissed the Pope's Toe as a Piece of Homage, ever since followed; appointed Image-Worship under severe Penalties, the honouring of Relicks, praying to Saints, and for the Dead, worshipping Saints, especially the blessed Virgin, who was to be worshipped as much as the Redeemer; and then it turned to more. Matters went thus very smoothly on with the Pope for the Space of 30 Years, that *Leo* was made Emperor. He was a Man of undauntoned Courage, and an implacable Hater of all these Things; he discouraged them both by his Example and Authority. In a few Years after he was possest of the Imperial Dignity, he called a numerous Council at *Constantinople*, to enquire into the Controversies of the Times, who condemned them all, as *idolatrous*; upon which, the Emperor, by his Edicts, ordered the Burning of all *Images*, *Pictures*, &c. discharged the other Things above-mentioned, under the severest Penalties, wrote expresly to *Gregory* II. to do the same: Upon which the Emperor and Pope fell by the Ears; *Gregory* excommunicate the Emperor, and *Leo* imprisoned his Legate, and banished the Patriarch of *Constantinople*, who had joined Pope *Gregory*. *Constantinus*, Son to *Leo Isauros*, succeeded his Father, and was called *Iconoclastes*, for his great Aversion to Images, carried on the Plan his Father had laid down; and his Son *Leo* followed both their Footsteps, yea, outdid them, for he banished his Mother *Irene*, and many great Courtiers, for worshipping of Images, &c. This was a very deadly Wound, and every One then expected the Church should be throughly reformed: These Endeavours lasted about the Space of Forty Years, in which Time fair Mints were made at the razing of *Idolatry*.

II. There is the Healing of this deadly Wound, which happened upon the Death of *Leo* the Grandſon of *Iſaurus*, which was not without the Suſpicion of Poiſon by his Mother's Artifices: However, that no ſooner happened, when *Irene* found Means to wind herſelf into the Government, and overturned all that had been done before. In her Time, the *Pope* called a Synod at *Rome*, and reſtored all the condemned Errors of Idolatry, and added a great many more: She loaded the Pope with many Honours, and much Riches; ſo that they were greater than ever. Some compute this to have fallen out 666 Years after the Writing of this Book of *Revelation*, and to fall in with the End of the eighth Century, about the Year 791, or thereby, which they contend to be the Number of the Beaſt's Name mentioned in the Cloſe of this Chapter. A few Years thereafter, *Charles* the *Great* ſucceeded, and ratified all *Irene* had done, and made no ſmall Addition to the Pope's Greatneſs.

III. The Conſequent of this Healing, *All the World wondered after the Beaſt*; where we have to notice, the Perſons, and their Practice.

1. The Perſons, *The whole World*, or rather the whole Earth; whereby, no doubt, we are to underſtand the unregenerate Part of the World, called often *Men of the Earth*: Yet we are not to take this in its utmoſt Senſe; for, no doubt, there were many Places of the habitable Earth, that never heard of the Pope, or his Greatneſs: But we may well allow it to extend to all the Places who had the Knowledge of this Man of Sin; And particularly, that this be expreſſive of all Ranks and Degrees of Men, high and low, rich and poor, were all intoxicate and bewitched with the Wine of this Whore's Fornication. The Emperors of the Eaſt, who till this Time had ſtood out, now were reconciled to the Pope, and owned him in all his Pretenſions, as did all the Powers in the Weſt and North, who took Care their Church-men ſhould be ſilent, or pay dear for their Freedom: As for the meaner Sort, they were either hood-winked, or overawed; and ſo there is no Myſtery in the Expreſſion.

2. The Deed of theſe Perſons, *They wondred after the Beaſt.* There is, to be ſure, a great Difference betwixt wondering *at*, and *after* a Thing. The Strangeneſs of any Object, upon the firſt Appearance, may force a Conſternation, and move Surprize, tho' thereby we feel a rooted Averſion thereto begot in us; but this is not to wonder *after*, which, beſides the ſudden affecting of our Admiration, does gradually glide into the Affections, and thus it becomes the Spark of Delight and Satisfaction: This is what I take to be the Meaning of the Expreſſion. This Wonder of the World, then, is nothing more or better, than that thoughtleſs Amazement which deludes Children and Fools, to any Thing that is *new*, *ſtrange*, and eſpecially if it be *agreeable* to their Pallat, which they ſwallow without more Queſtions asking.

4 And they worſhipped the Dragon which gave Power unto the Beaſt; and they worſhipped the Beaſt, ſaying, Who is like unto the Beaſt? who is able to make War with him?

The Beaſt is here advanced in the Eyes of the World; which, to me, appears but an Illuſtration of what we had in the laſt Clauſe of the preceeding Verſe: And in this we have, 1. Their Action. And, 2. Their Expreſſion.

I. Their Action and Behaviour, for the Perſons are the ſame; where we ſhortly notice, 1. The Objects. 2. The Acts.

1. The Objects are two, 1. The Dragon; that is the Devil, chiefly and materially, tho' not intentionally; becauſe, as I proved before, whatever is not done to God by his Command, is done to the Devil: But what I take to be the Senſe of it is, They hugg'd themſelves in their old and beloved Heatheniſh Rites; to be ſure, they would love them, becauſe train'd up under them; ſo that here they had no new Religion impoſed on them, but an *Old* under a *new* Name: And their Emperors finding it the readieſt Way to entail the *Scartings* of the Imperial Dignity to their Poſterity, fail'd not to cajole the Popes, to their own Diſhonour; becauſe, the more friendly they were this Way, the better pleaſed were their People: And in this Senſe they might worſhip the Dragon, who gave Power or Authority to the Beaſt. 2. *They worſhipped the Beaſt, i. e.* the Pope, who was a mere Creature of the Emperor's: Yet had they more Regard to the Beaſt than his Author; tho', in all Reaſon, the Workman ſhould have more Praiſe than the Work; but this is the Way of the World.

(2.) The Act, *They worſhipped*, προσκυνέω, which ſignifies a very reverend Bowing of the whole Body, in order to kiſs whom we reſpect. This was ſometimes an Act of Civil Reſpect, and what *Mordecai* ſhould have paid *Haman*, Eſther iii. 5. for by this ſame Word does the Septuagint tranſlate the Word rendred to bow. This ſame Word

Word is uſed to expreſs the Carriage of the indebted Servant to his Lord, *Mat.* xviii. 26. This Word is uſed alſo to expreſs the Worſhip due to God, *Pſal.* ii. 12. *Kiſs the Son.* The ſame Word by the 70, And *I went up to* Jeruſalem *to worſhip*, *Acts* xxiv. 11. In this laſt Senſe we have it moſt commonly. If it be asked, In what Senſe it is to be taken here? I think we may include both, and the rather from the laſt Part of the Verſe, where the Beaſt is preferred above all: And, while Emperors ſtooped ſo low as kiſs the Pope's Toes, what could the unthinking Croud do?

II. Their Expreſſions, expoſing the Sentiments of their Minds.

1. *Who is like unto the Beaſt?* This is plainly to make him incomparable; as, *To whom will ye liken God? or, what Likeneſs will ye compare unto him?* Iſa. iv. 18. And, *Who is like unto the Lord our God?* Pſal. cxiii. 5. All own theſe to point out the infinite Perfections of God: The ſame foulſom and prophane Titles are given to the Pope by his Followers, as *Vice-god*; as did a Profeſſor of Divinity in his publick Theſes, and others, call him, *Our lord god the Pope*, and frequently *god in the Earth*: Never yet was any of theſe condemned by his pretended Holineſs.

2. *Who is able to make War with him?* Which is to proclaim his invincible Power. This might juſtly agree to God, and, without Blaſphemy, cannot be aſcribed to any other: It will be found very much a-kin to that Epithet due to God, *Pſal.* lxxxix. 8. *O Lord God of Hoſts, who is a ſtrong God like unto thee?* And, *Jer.* x. 6. *Foraſmuch as there is none like thee, O Lord, thou art great, and thy Name is great in Might.* It was no Wonder the World wondered after the Beaſt, and thought no Power able to grapple with him, when, about the Middle of the tenth Century, Pope *Hildebrand* lorded it ſo much over *Henry* IV. Emperor, that he ſummoned him to appear, and anſwer for his Management of the Empire; and, upon his Refuſal to anſwer, did both excommunicate and depoſe the Emperor, looſing his Subjects from their Allegiance: Nor was he reſtored, till he travelled to *Italy*, in the Midſt of Winter; and he, with his Empreſs, and Son, had the hard Penance of ſtanding three Days bareſoot in coarſe Raiment at the Pope's Gate, begging Pardon and Abſolution, and was content to hold the Empire of him. In a ſhort Time after, the Pope's Power reached to all the ſovereign Powers in *Europe*; ſo that it might well be ſaid, Who is able to make War with the Beaſt? then it was the Pope did oppoſe himſelf to, *and was exalted above every Thing that is called God*, 2 Theſſ. ii. 4.

5 And there was given unto him a Mouth ſpeaking great Things, and Blaſphemies, and Power was given unto him to continue Forty and two Months.

6 And he opened his Mouth in Blaſphemies againſt God, to blaſpheme his Name, and his Tabernacle, and them that dwell in Heaven.

Here we have the Pride and Arrogancy of this Beaſt, with his Continuance; where we are to remark, 1. The Ground of his Pride. 2. The Continuance of it. 3. The Diſcoveries thereof.

I. The Ground of this Pride; where, 1. What he had. 2. How he had it.

1. What he had, *A Mouth ſpeaking great Things, and Blaſphemies.* He was not dumb before, nor are we to think he had no more but the Mouth of a Lion to roar: For indeed, tho' he had a Mouth before, and inclined to both ſpeak and roar; yet he waited a more convenient Seaſon. But before he did not utter *Great Things*: The Senſe of this I think is, Before the Pope came to his Height, he might have Projects and Deſigns what to do, and how to behave; but all theſe lurked Deep in the Heart, and were not at firſt proclaimed to the World: Nor was it fit; for, had he told plainly how far his Ambition reached, no doubt a Combination of ſecular Powers would have made all his big Hopes abortive: But now, that by many Advances he has got to the Pinnacle of Greatneſs, he ſticks not to utter intelligibly what was in his Mind before. We have this ſame ſaid of that *Horn* in *Daniel*, before whom three fell, *Dan.* vii. 8, 20. *That it had a Mouth ſpeaking very great Things.* v. 25. *And he ſhall ſpeak great Things againſt the moſt High.* By this Mouth I think we are to underſtand a legiſlative Power, which gives Laws and Ordinances to be obſerved by others. It is objected againſt *Idols*, as a Part of their Imperfection, *Pſal.* cxv. 5. *That they cannot ſpeak*, or, as ſome render it, *Command*: *They have Mouths, but they ſpeak not*, i. e. cannot utter their own Will if they had any, as the true God had uttered his Will, in a moſt audible Manner, from *Sinai*. It may further contain his giving Anſwers of a Piece with his Laws; for theſe Temples were always moſt regarded where Oracles were, from which Anſwers might be expected: This alſo has been long a Method uſed by

the Papiſts to delude the People; It will alſo comprehend his proud and vain Boaſting of himſelf. As for what he uttered, it is wrapt up in two Generals, *Great Things, and Blaſphemies.* The firſt may reſpect the greatning of himſelf, and his imperious Carriage towards the World; The other may concern his falſe Religion, called *Blaſphemies*, of which we will hear more when we come to the next Verſe.

2. How he had it, *It was given unto him.* There are three Opinions about this, becauſe it is not ſaid by whom: Some think it was the *Dragon*; ſome the *Devil*; and others think it was God, from whom all Power comes. It is not to be doubted but that God, who limited him as to his Continuance, did alſo bound him as to his Powers; but then we muſt underſtand it of God's moſt juſt and holy Permiſſion. However, I think, the other two are not to be neglected; for to be ſure the *Dragon*, by exalting the *Pope*, and giving him his Seat, gave the Beaſt Opportunity to *ſpeak*. Again, *Satan*, who had now adopted this Man of Sin as his own, would not fail to prompt him thereto; and therefore all the three, each their own Way, did concur.

II. The Continuance of this Beaſt, *And Power was given to him to continue Forty and two Months*: According to the latter, it ſhould be rendered, *He had Authority to make Forty and two Months.* This has moved ſome to think there is a Word ſuppreſſed, and they ſupply it out of *v.* 7. It was given to him *to make War*, &c. But they ſhould conſider, the Conſtruction in the Cloſe of the Verſe muſt be altered at this Rate; for Expreſſions of Time are always rendered in the *Accuſative*, according to the *Government* of the *Verb*; and if another *Accuſative* interveen, there is ſtill another *Verb* to *rule* that, as we ſee, *Chap.* xi. 2. So that if the *Accuſative* χρόνον were inſerted, as ſome Copies have, there would be another *Verb* to *rule* the Time; which however they have not thought of. But indeed there is no Occaſion for this *Criticiſm*; for we find it a very ordinary Phraſe in Scripture, *Acts* xv. 33. *After they had tarried there a Space*; originally, *After they had made there a Space.* And again, *Acts* xviii. 23. *After he had ſpent* [Orig. *made*] *ſome Time there*: And in many other Places; and ſo we had beſt allow our Tranſlation as very agreeable to the *Greek Phraſeology*. We need not debate further about the Meaning of this prophetical Number, after what was ſaid, *Chap.* xi. 2. Only I ſee not how theſe *Numbers*, tho' they be equal, can be made *Parallels*, i. e. to begin and end together; for the firſt is the Meaſure of the Church's extreme Sufferings, and this the Meaſure of Antichriſt's Continuance, which two may be ſeparate; for Antichriſt may ſubſiſt, and yet the Church not be in the Wilderneſs, as I reckon it is at this Day; and I am ſatisfied, about one Half of the Church's Miſery was over before the Papal Antichriſt aroſe. It is true this will conclude, the Church's *Sabbatical* Period will not ſucceed her emerging out of that Plunge of Miſery immediately, but that ſome Centuries will interveen betwixt the one and the other; nor do I know of any Paſſage of this Prophecy that contradicts the ſame.

III. There is the Diſcovery of this *inſolent Mouth*, *v.* 6. it is ſaid, *He opened his Mouth.* Some ſay, The Meaning is, He blaſphemed God in a moſt horrible Manner. This is certainly true; but to open the Mouth, ſignifies to utter loudly and plainly: And this will caſt up, when we conſider,

1. In general the Nature of his Speech, He opened his Mouth in *Blaſphemies*, i. e. hurtful and noxious Speeches, or opprobrious Speeches. Two Things are wrapt up in this Expreſſion, whether it be directed againſt God or Man, *Falſhood* and *Malice*, which is much a-kin to the Devil.

2. More particularly we have the Parts of this Blaſphemy, in theſe ſeveral Particulars, 1. *Againſt God*, i. e. againſt the *Nature* and *Perſons* of the *Godhead*, or the *Divine Perfections*, in ſome of theſe Methods we had before, on *v.* 1. 2. *Againſt the Name of God*, i. e. againſt all the Diſcoveries and Manifeſtations he has given of himſelf; as we have the ſame plainly and comprehenſively in our *Catechiſm*, in Anſwer to that Queſtion, *What is required in the third Commandment?* Where, by the *Name of God*, we are to underſtand *his Names, Titles, Attributes, Ordinances, Words and Works.* That *Antichriſt* has been guilty of *Blaſphemy* againſt all theſe, I might make out at great Length: A Taſte or two ſhall ſuffice; as, that he arrogates to himſelf *the Attributes of God's Holineſs*, and is deſigned in all Writs, Letters, *&c. Moſt holy Father.* Yea, Pope *Nicolaus* I. *Anno* 858, took to himſelf the very Name of God, and aſſerted he had Power to judge of all Men, and was accountable to none. They claim to themſelves the Power of diſpenſing with the Laws of God, and of pardoning at Pleaſure the Breach of them, *&c.* 3. *Againſt the Tabernacle of God.* Here we may either underſtand the *Humane Nature* of Chriſt, called *the true Tabernacle*, Heb. viii. 11. which he blaſphemes by Maſſes, Hoſts, and the blaſphemous Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation*; or the Church of God, called *his Temple*, Rev. xi. 1. by mutilating and adulterating the Doctrine, Worſhip, Government, and Diſcipline thereof, in all its Parts.

4. *Againſt*

4. *Againſt them that dwell in Heaven.* It is no Matter whether we take *Heaven* here for the Imperial Heaven where the Saints are glorified, or for the Militant Church of Chriſt; for it will be a great Truth, that this Beaſt blaſphemes them both: The Glorified Saints they blaſpheme, by building them Temples, hallowing Days for them, worſhipping them, and aſcribing all Sorts of Mercies to them, which can only come from God to Believers through Chriſt. As for the Saints on Earth, he blaſphemes them, by condemning them for Hereticks, ſlandering them, yea, and fighting againſt them; as we ſee, *v.* 7. But I rather take this to be meant of the Triumphant Saints, ſeeing we meet with the Pope's Carriage towards theſe in a Militant Condition, under the next General Head.

7 And it was given unto him to make War with the Saints, and to overcome them: And Power was given him over all Kindreds, and Tongues, and Nations.

8 And all that dwell on the Earth ſhall worſhip him, whoſe Names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb, ſlain from the Foundation of the World.

Here we have, 1. His ſucceſful Expeditions. 2. The Extent of his Juriſdiction. And, 3. The Regard theſe concilitate him.

I. There is his *War with the Saints.* Tho' the Pope has had many Wars, yet the moſt notable of them are theſe directed againſt the People of God, whom he never failed to perſecute with his utmoſt Vigour, when any Opportunity offered. There are many Volumes writ on this Subject: Nor ſhall I launch further out into this Deep, than ſhortly to point at ſome remarkable Methods he has taken this Way; as, he fights,

1. Againſt the *Doctrine of Chriſt,* which he has wounded in every Article. This begun with *Popery,* and was carried on with it, till that prophane Council of *Trent* did muſter all his Errors in one Body, in the Year 1545.

2. Againſt the *Worſhip.* This was done very early; for *Adoration of Images, Prayers to Saints,* &c. was eſtabliſhed by Law after the ſixth Century, tho' it was ſometimes under a Cloud till the Eighth, but ſince it has prevailed. And, in the Beginning of the Ninth, was laid the Foundation of the *idolatrous Maſs:* For in what they call the ſeventh General Council, was eſtabliſhed the *Corporal Preſence of Chriſt in the Sacrament;* which had Plenty of Oppoſition, till about the Beginning of the twelfth Century: It was a compleat Work, and by the *Lateran* Council named *Tranſubſtantiation.*

3. Againſt the *practical Part of Religion.* Never were greater Sins, and more avowedly committed, than have been found in ſeveral Popes, and indulged to others as they paid. Publick Stews were allowed very early, ſome ſay, About the Middle of the ninth Century: Yea, every Sin that can be named, but ſhould not, did abound among them; till at Length the *Jeſuites,* theſe helliſh Caſuiſts, have found out the Knack to make all Sin no Sin: But I am aſhamed to name Particulars.

4. Againſt the *Saints Perſons:* By their Councils, Decrees, Bulls, *&c.* condemning to Hell all that did not follow their Meaſures. And at laſt, in the Year 1206, was the *Inquiſition-Court* erected, by which many of the Saints were murdered, and never heard of; but their Souls are under the Altar. This was the firſt open and external Violence offered to the Saints; and it had this great Advantage, among a Croud of Miſeries, that it diſcovered a great Number of worthy Confeſſors that were not thought to be in the World, ſo univerſal was the Defection of theſe Times. A Writer of that Age ſays, "Chriſt was faſt aſleep in the Ship of the Church when the Storm was moſt "violent, but there was none in her to awake him by their Cries." However he was miſtaken, as was *Elijah* the Prophet long before.

5. This Beaſt fought againſt the Saints in a moſt open and hoſtile Manner. The firſt grand Attack was upon the *Waldenſes,* ſo deſigned from *Waldo* a Merchant of *Lions* in *France,* who by reading the Scriptures, *Anno* 1160, found how erroneous the Church of *Rome* was. This Man's Followers in a few Years became ſo numerous, that Pope *Alexander* III. excommunicate them, and ordered the Biſhops and Princes to perſecute them, which they did to the greateſt Extremity; ſo that ſeveral Provinces were laid waſte by Fire and Sword, to root out theſe Saints, and 80 of them would be burnt in one Fire: It is computed, that above 80000 of them ſealed the Truths of God with the laſt Drop of their Blood. After this, about the Beginning of the twelfth Century, the People of *Albigeois,* in *Languedock* (a Country alſo) in *France,* who had learned from the *Waldenſes,* did adhere to the Doctrines of the *Bible,* in Oppoſition to the

Errors of *Rome*; and from their native Country were called *Albigenſes*. Theſe carried yet more manly; for they gathered together in great Numbers, and ſtood their Ground againſt their Perſecuters, and ſometimes not without Succeſs: Till after a While, the Pope ſent an Army under the Direction of a *Legat*; The Emperor and King of *France* joined theſe Forces with a great Number of their beſt Troops, and miſerably defeat the poor *Albigenſes*, and their Adherents; ſo that a Popiſh Writer owns, above a Million of them were cut off in the Courſe of that War. There is this further noticeable about theſe Champions for the Truth, That after they were routed, and moſt of them ſlain, the reſt fled to all Kingdoms where they could find a Place, except ſome, and no ſmall Number, who could not find a Way of Eſcape; to whom the Archbiſhop of *Tholouſe* offered a Pardon, provided they would renounce their heretical (as he called them) Tenets, and own the Catholick Faith; but theſe bravely refuſed their Lives upon ſuch Terms, and declared, They were *the overcome Saints*; and, while dying, comforted themſelves with this Text, which to me is a lively Commentary. Yet all this is but little, if we conſider the Havock was made by the Beaſt in *Bohemia*, *Hungary*, *Saxony*, *Sweden*, *Switzerland*, and other Places afterwards. But to enter upon the Detail of theſe, would engage us in the Hiſtory of the Reformation, a Work done to notable Purpoſe by many excellent Hands, and which lies not ſo directly in our Way.

6. He fights againſt the Saints by clandeſtine Methods, allowing them neither Time to fight or flee; but by *Maſſacres* mows down Millions. We might mention ſeverals, but two of the greateſt Note ſhall ſuffice: The firſt at *Paris*, *Auguſt* 24, 1572, when 21 *great Peers*, 1200 *Gentlemen of Diſtinction*, and a Million of others, of all Ranks, were cut off in one Night; which Butchery the Pope honoured with a *Jubilee*, as ſoon as the News reached *Rome*. The other is better known to us, by the Deſignation of the Maſſacre in *Ireland*, which did begin *October* 23d, 1641, and therein, within two Months, were cut off about 200000 Proteſtants in that Kingdom.

Theſe Things, with a Witneſs, prove both the Beaſt's *War* with, and Victory over the *Saints*: Nor have we Reaſon to doubt, did God pleaſe, for our Sins, to ſuffer him yet to prevail againſt the Reformation, he would be as cruel as ever, and be ready to follow the ſame Meaſures. What Sort of Proteſtants then muſt theſe be, who would bring us again under ſuch a Yoke, that we muſt either make Shipwreck of a good Conſcience, or forfeit our Lives? And, how can our modern *Jacobites* vindicate themſelves from being Partakers of their Guilt? Is it poſſible a Reformed Church can be ſafe under the Protection of One, who makes it one of the fundamental Articles of his Faith, to root out the *Northern Hereſy*; the beſt Name the Papiſts, and even ſome who would be thought *Proteſtants*, beſtow on the *Reformation*? Beſides, *Papiſts* hold it meritorious to extirpate *Hereticks* and *Hereſy*.

II. The Extent of this Beaſt's Juriſdiction, *Power* [Authority] *was given him over all Kindreds, and Tongues, and Nations*. He had, by theſe former Methods, ſo leſſened his Enemies, terrified ſuch as were indifferent, and encouraged his faſt Friends, that his Empire grew broad and wide. As for the particular Senſe of the Words, we had it, *Chap.* v. 9 and other Places, yet in none of them are we to underſtand it of Individuals; it is enough for the Senſe and Truth of this Clauſe, if the moſt Part were ſubject to him, which, I believe, will not be debated, eſpecially that we comprehend therein all Ranks and Degrees; and that it is ſaid, He had *Authority*, declares he had an orderly diſpoſed Government. All own this in an eminent Manner to be true of *Rome*.

III. The Regard theſe conciliate him, v. 8. where we have, 1. The Extent of the Power of this Beaſt over Perſons. 2. The Reſtriction thereof.

1. The Extent of his Power over Perſons, *All that dwell on the Earth ſhall worſhip him*. Where we may take *Earth* either for the World of Ungodly, and then the After-reſtriction is an *Exigenſis*, That *their Names are not written*, &c. Or, we may take *Earth* in a proper Senſe, and then the next Clauſe is an Exception or Reſtriction. We have explained all the Terms before, v. 4. This verifies our Lord's Words, *That the Way to Deſtruction is broad, and there are many that walk therein*.

2. There is the Reſtriction or Exception, *Whoſe Names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb ſlain from the Foundation of the World*. There is ſome Difference among Expoſitors as to the ordering of this Clauſe: Some render it, *Whoſe Names are not written from the Foundation of the World in the Book of Life of the Lamb that was ſlain*. We have indeed ſuch an Expreſſion as this afterwards, *Rev.* xvii. 8. *Whoſe Names were not written in the Book of Life from the Foundation of the World*. It is alſo agreeable to other Scriptures, *Epheſ.* i. 4. *God choſe the Elect in Chriſt before the Foundation of the World*. Again, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 13. *God hath from the Beginning choſen you to Salvation*. So that this is a great Truth: Yet that will not make it the

Scope

Scope of the Place, which our Tranſlation hath hit; for, according to it, *From the Foundation of the World*, muſt reſpect the *Slaughter of the Lamb*, and not the *Writing of their Names*, &c. And this is true of *Chriſt's Death*; tho' he died not actually from the Foundation of the World, yet it was determined and decreed; and therefore the Apoſtle ſays, 1 *Pet.* i. 19. *He was verily fore-ordained before the Foundation of the World*: For, from all Eternity was Chriſt ſet apart for the great Work of Redemption. As for the Meaning of the *Book of Life*, and being written therein, we had it, *Chap.* iii. 5. and that of the Slaughter of the Lamb, we explain'd, *Chap.* v. 6.

There is a Queſtion falls naturally in here to be ſpoke of, which I reduce to theſe Terms very agreeable to the Text, *viz. Whether any of God's Elect will wonder after, and worſhip this Beaſt?* The Text ſeems to be ſo deciſive in this Point, that one might think it Satisfaction enough to any honeſt Man, ſeeing it is ſo plain, as to diſtinguiſh betwixt the Worſhippers of the Beaſt, and theſe that have their *Names written in the Book of Life*; and ſo it is expreſly aſſerted, that theſe whoſe Names are written, will not worſhip the Beaſt. Any who will, may accuſe of this Uncharitableneſs; but I would adviſe they take Care they give not too much Ground to think them vain, and prophane in their fooliſh Minds. I ſhall premiſe ſome Things to underſtand this Queſtion a little further, then anſwer the Queſtion, and eſtabliſh the Anſwer.

Premiſe 1. We are not to extend this to all that in any Senſe comply with *Popery*. It would indeed be hard to ſay, that all who had in the leaſt yielded to the Power of this Beaſt, ſhould be damned; becauſe we find a loud Call given to ſome ſuch, *Jer.* li. 6. *Flee out of the Midſt of* Babylon, *and deliver every Man his own Soul.* Which is the ſame with what we have in this Prophecy, *Rev.* xviii. 4. *I heard a Voice from Heaven, ſaying, Come out of her, my People, that ye be not Partakers of her Sins.* Whence it appears, that ſome may, for a Time, and in ſome Things, ſymbolize with that *Idolatrous Church*, and yet be God's People; Or, as it reads in this Text, *Have their Names written in the Lamb's Book of Life.*

Premiſe 2. They who have gone great Lengths with *Popery*, and joined the ſame in ſome, or moſt of the worſt Things about it, if they repent, and forſake the Communion of that *Sacrilegious Whore*, will find Mercy. We know ſome of our *Reformers* had been forward enough this Way, yet they found Mercy: But, for theſe who fully and finally adhere to the Principles and Practices of *Popery*, we are warranted from the Text, to believe their Names are not *written in the Lamb's Book of Life.* I am ſure it is the Senſe and Scope of this Text, and therefore we may ſafely receive it. I ſhall further eſtabliſh this, by theſe few Grounds;

1. The Principles and Practices of *Popery* are groſs *Idolatry*, and ſo will infallibly exclude from the Kingdom of Heaven, 1 *Cor.* vi. 9. *Idolaters ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* There is a Bill of Excluſion paſt in Heaven againſt all ſuch: And, that Papiſts are Idolaters, we proved above.

2. All, but the *Elect*, may be intangled in the Snares of *Antichriſt*; ſo that this being a diſtinguiſhing Character betwixt the *Elect* and *Reprobate*, it is evident, whoſoever yields to his Deluſions, and perſiſts therein, ſhall never ſee the Face of God in Mercy: This is plain from Chriſt's Words, *Mat.* xxiv. 24. *There ſhall ariſe falſe Chriſts, and falſe Prophets, and ſhall ſhew Signs and Wonders, inſomuch that, if it were poſſible, they ſhall deceive the very Elect.*

3. All the Followers of Antichriſt are given up of God to utter and final Deſtruction; *God ſhall ſend them ſtrong Deluſions, that they ſhould believe a Lie, that they all might be damned.* It is evident, that *Popery* is *Antichriſt*, at leaſt a very conſiderable Part thereof. I might homologate this from the Harmony of the moſt valuable of Proteſtant Writers, upon the ſame or equivalent Grounds: Nor did ever the Charity of any of them go further, till of late, ſome, who ſhew more than half an Inclination to join themſelves to theſe Abominations which God has branded with his Curſe, ſpeak otherwiſe.

9 If any Man have an Ear, let him hear.

10 He that leadeth into Captivity, ſhall go into Captivity: He that killeth with the Sword, muſt be killed with the Sword; here is the Patience, and the Faith of the Saints.

This is the Concluſion, and Application of this Part of the Viſion, in theſe two; 1. An upſtirring and rouzing Call, *v.* 9. 2. A conſolatory Prophecy, *v.* 10.

I. There is an Alarm given, *He that an Ear, let him hear.* The Senſe of this was given above, *Chap.* ii. 7. As it ſtands here in the Context, theſe few Things will caſt up from

it; 1. The Diſcerning of Antichriſtian *Rome*, is not the Talent of every one, and therefore it is the *Pope* hath ſo many Advocates in the World: Yea, tho' the Marks of this Beaſt are advanced with all the Evidence the Nature of the Thing is capable of, yet will not this Teſtimony be received; and therefore the Spirit ſays, *He that hath an Ear, let him hear.* 2. Every one is hereby called to look out ſharp, to diſcover this great Enemy to true Religion; for this is a weighty *Epiphonema*, a loud Call to Attendance: This the Voice of a Trumpet, that gives a certain Sound. 3. I look on this as deſigned in a particular Manner to prepare for

II. The comfortable Prophecy, *v.* 10. The Senſe whereof, to me, ſeems very plain; and it is this, God had been pleaſed to reveal to his Prophet *John*, the *Riſe* and *Progreſs* of Popery in the preceeding Verſes; and now, in a few Words, he foretells the *Downfall* thereof: Without this, the reſt had been a moſt melancholly Relation; but when we know, whatever Height the Man of Sin is to come to, yet is he not to continue, but muſt fall, and be deſtroyed, this is moſt comfortable.

Yet this Senſe is not received by all; for ſome croſs the Rules of all good Interpretation, and endeavour to ſpell out of this Text the *Mahometan* Doctrine of *Paſſive Obedience*, by which they would perſwade Princes, however *godleſs*, they are *gods*; and ſo tempt them to ſhew themſelves *Devils*, to the ſad Experience of ſuch as love God, and keep his Ways. But, ſhould we take this in their Senſe, let us ſee what the Amount of it is, *viz.* The Pope will prevail, and carry all before him, therefore you muſt tamely yield your Necks to the Halter, *&c.* Is not this to deify the Man of Sin? Now, what is the Import of *v.* 9. Liſten to this, for you are called to make your Teſtament at the Stake, for you are to uſe no Methods for your own Delivery. But the Evil of the Matter is, I ſee not how they can reconcile this to the Words as they ly; for it is ſaid in the Beginning of the Verſe, *He that leadeth into Captivity, ſhall go into Captivity; and he that killeth with the Sword, muſt be killed with the Sword.* Of whom doth the Prophet ſpeak? of the Saints? then, it is ſuppoſed, they are all Fighters, and ſometimes proſperous too: But this thwarts the whole Strain of the Prophecy here, and it deſtroys paſſive Obedience, if they ſtruggle till they be overcome. But, if we mean this of the Beaſt, as in all Reaſon we ſhould, then it is a Prophecy of his *Fall*; and is a ſhort Sketch of what we meet with in the *Vials*, and is the ſame in Subſtance with what the Pſalmiſt ſays, *Pſal.* cxxxvii. 8, 9. *O Daughter of* Babylon, *who art to be deſtroyed, happy ſhall he be that rewardeth thee, as thou haſt ſerved us. Happy ſhall he be that taketh thy little Ones, and daſheth them againſt the Stones.* We have the like by *Iſaiah*, Chap. xxxiii. 1. *Wo to thee that ſpoileſt, and waſt not ſpoiled, and dealeſt treacherouſly, and they dealt not treacherouſly with thee: When thou ſhalt ceaſe to ſpoil, thou ſhalt be ſpoiled; and when thou ſhalt make an End to deal treacherouſly, they ſhall deal treacherouſly with thee.* This I take to be the Senſe of the Words, and makes a beautiful Connexion with

The latter Clauſe of the Verſe, *Here is the Patience and the Faith of the Saints.* Where we have two neceſſary Graces commended to the Exerciſe of the Saints.

1. *Patience.* It is no Matter whether we take it for the Saints Carriage under their Sackcloth Condition for 1260 Years, wherein the Papacy is moſt active for a good Part of that Time; Or if we take it for their waiting the Accompliſhment of the Promiſe in the firſt Part of the Verſe, that it will come to paſs at the appointed Time, during which they wait without Murmuring: Yea, tho' they ſhould not live to ſee this *Cataſtrophe* of the Pope, much leſs to have any Hand in it; yet, like *Abraham*, to ſolace themſelves that a Day of Enlargement is coming to the Church, by the Fall of her Enemies.

2. *Faith*; which is an Acquieſcing in the Faithfulneſs and Power of God; that, for the Sake of his Promiſe, and by the Arm of his Power, he will bring to paſs Salvation for his People. Yea, this Faith and Patience is plainly a *Believing in Hope againſt Hope*; for Faith will keep its Hold, when the moral Probability is very ſmall, merely becauſe of the Word of Promiſe.

We are next to view the ſecond Part of this Chapter, from *v.* 11. where, I think, we have the Illuſtration of the fourth Seal, *Chap.* vi. 7, 8. If I am not miſtaken, the other three have quadrate pretty well; but we ſhall not find this ſo eaſy, becauſe the Throng of Expoſitors incline to make this Emblem in *v.* 11. the ſame in Signification with what we had, *v.* 1. I hear of one Mr. *Walker*, a Countryman of ours in *Ireland*, has eſſayed to prove them as different in their *Significations*, as in their *Repreſentations*: But all my Pains could not meet with that Book, which might have been of Uſe to me. It is true, the Number of Suffrages, or the Weight of Perſons Characters, will not make that to be Truth, which was not ſo in itſelf before; and eſpecially Prophecies are to be cleared from their Context, and Conſent with other Prophecies.

That

That which to me ſeems the Scope of this Part of the Viſion is this, The *Beaſt* in this *Viſion* is different from the former, both in Emblem and Signification; And, that as by the fourth Seal I underſtood *Mahometaniſm*, ſo by this Beaſt we are to mean the ſame: The firſt of theſe I ſhall endeavour to make good, before I enter upon the Words; And the ſecond will appear to Conviction as we go through them. Yet we are not to think that nothing of the firſt Beaſt is found here, for the ſame is often mentioned: Beſides, there will caſt up ſuch a Similitude betwixt them two, that the latter Part of this Prophecy may concern them both. I am therefore to offer ſome Reaſons why I believe theſe two Beaſts to be different from other, in Senſe, as well as in Figure.

1. This Beaſt is quite different from the former in many Things, 1. As to his Spring and Origin; the one riſes out of the Earth, the other comes out of the Sea. 2. This Beaſt has only two Horns, the other had ten. 3. The firſt Beaſt had ſeven Heads, and none being mentioned here, it is preſumeable he had but one, out of which grew the two Horns. 4. The former Beaſt received the Seat or Throne of the Dragon, which is not ſaid of this. 5. There was great Likeneſs betwixt the former *Beaſt* and the *Dragon*, but this only ſpeaks like him. 6. The firſt Beaſt received a mortal Wound ſhortly after he roſe, but it is not ſaid ſo of this.

2. This Beaſt is co-exiſtent with the firſt Beaſt, and therefore cannot be the ſame, and much leſs a ſecond Edition thereof, elſe the firſt Beaſt had been off the Field when the ſecond appeared; ſo that they are two diſtinct Emblems, and of different Things. This will be evident, becauſe, 1. The firſt Beaſt is to continue 1260 Years; ſo that, if this Beaſt be not cotemporary with it, it is not yet riſen, and therefore it cannot, at leaſt till it riſe, be a ſecond Edition of the former; yet all own it to be exiſtent, tho' they differ as to the Thing. 2. This Beaſt is expreſly called *another*, and ſo it cannot be the ſame. And wherever this Word αλλος is read, it is always *diſcriminati*: We find it no leſs than eight Times in the Space of three Verſes, 1 *Cor.* xv. 39, &c. and why it ſhould not be ſo taken here, I would fain have a Reaſon. 3. This Beaſt is ſaid to exiſt *before* the other Beaſt, *v.* 12. It is not material whether we take *before* in Preſence of, or in Oppoſition to; for ſtill it ſuppoſes them to be two, and to be great at the ſame Time. 4. This Beaſt *compelled Men to worſhip* the firſt Beaſt; which could not be ſaid, if either the firſt and ſecond Beaſt were the ſame, or if the firſt Beaſt was gone before, or at the Appearance of the ſecond. 5. This Beaſt is ſaid to take his Model from the firſt Beaſt, for he made an *Image* or a *Reſemblance* of him, *v.* 14. and to be ſure, like is not the ſame: Whence it is plain the firſt Beaſt had made ſome conſiderable Advance before this ſecond Beaſt; and that he moulded his Form of Government after the Faſhion of the firſt, which exactly agrees with the *Mahometan* Scheme.

3. The *Muſſelmans* Empire (as the *Mahometans* call themſelves) will not be found in this Prophecy, if we underſtand not this Paſſage of them. Nor is it ſuppoſable, when the Spirit of God is enumerating the *Enemies* of the Church, he would neglect ſo conſiderable a *Foe*: Yea, I ſcruple not to aſſert, that when we read of God's Enemies by Pairs, in this Prophecy, *Mahomet* is one of them; as when we hear of the *Beaſt* and the *Falſe Prophet* ſeveral Times.

4. We find theſe two Beaſts at their Fall (which I ſhewed will happen about the ſame Time) diſtinguiſhed from other, by Names more familiar to us, and perfectly expreſſive of them; where the *Papacy* is called *the Beaſt*, and *Mahometaniſm* the *Falſe Prophet*, Rev. xix. 20. And again of their judicial State, *Rev.* xx. 10. *In Fire and Brimſtone*; where we find the *Beaſt* and *Falſe Prophet* under the ſame Doom. And when we have the Account of their Zeal in promoting their Errors, *the Frogs* are ſaid *to come out of the Mouth of the Beaſt and of the falſe Prophet*, Rev. xvi. 13. All theſe appear ſo pat to the preſent Purpoſe, it is not in my Power to reſiſt their Force, tho' I be ſo unhappy as not to ſee any of the ſame Mind.

In this Paſſage we have, 1. A Deſcription of this Beaſt, *v.* 11. 2. An Account of his Actions, *v.* 12, 13. 3. The Hiſtory of this Beaſt in Conjunction with the firſt Beaſt, to *v.* 18. 4. The Concluſion, in the laſt Verſes.

11 And I beheld another Beaſt coming up out of the Earth, and he had two Horns like a Lamb, and he ſpake as a Dragon.

We have ſpoke of the Nature and Signification of one Beaſt in the prophetick Stile, as alſo of *John*'s Evidence of the Manifeſtation, *v.* 1. and in other Places; ſo that it remains here we conſider about the other Beaſt, 1. Whence he came, and how he came? 2. A comparative Account of him to a Lamb, and to a Dragon; which may let us in a little to what is ſignified thereby.

I. There is the Origin of this Beaſt: Where we notice, 1. Whence he came. And, 2. How he came.

1. Whence he came, *Out of the Earth.* I cannot add any Thing to what was ſaid above, *Chap.* x. 2. ſo that by Earth we are to underſtand that Part of the World called *Aſia*, whence indeed *Mahomet* did ſpring.

2. The Way how, *Coming up.* It is the ſame Word rendred *riſe up*, v. 1. ſo that this Beaſt came not to his Height at the firſt, more than the other. Nor will it be improper, about this Beaſt, to mention a few of theſe gradual Steps by which he roſe, as we did in the former.

(1.) *Mahomet*, that great *Impoſtor*, began, by the Aſſiſtance of a Renagado *Chriſtian*, and a perverſe *Jew*, to diffuſe that confuſed Rapſody the *Alcoran*, about the 44 Year of his Age, which fell in with the Year of Chriſt 615: But then the Number of his Diſciples were few, and himſelf much ſuſpected by the Heathen, and even thoſe of his own Kindred. To gain Reputation, he feign'd he had made an Expedition to Heaven in the Year 621, and thence brought Inſtructions: From this he dated his *Ægira*; which Device was very ſerviceable to him in ſcattering his Errors: And as his Numbers increaſed, he wiſely managed their Force, both about *Mecca* and *Medina*, for the Propagation of his new Doctrine. About ſix Years after, he was created a King by his Followers, giving out that he was *the great Prophet of God*: So that he had both the Imperial and Pontifical Power; and did exert it to notable Purpoe, till the Year 631, when he died of Poiſon, which, ſome ſay, had lurked three Years in his Body, and was the Occaſion of theſe epileptick Fits he was afflicted with: But others refuſe this. However, in a few Years he made a great Advance.

(2.) After his Death, the *Arabians*, who had deſigned themſelves *Saracens* from *Sarah* the Wife of *Abraham*, kept that Power which *Mahomet* had exerted, the chief Ruler having the Deſignation of *Caliph*; all of them pretending to be related to, or deſcending from the grand Impoſtor, for the Space of 200 Years; during which Time the moſt Part of *Aſia*, and a no ſmall Part of *Europe*, was ſubject to that monſtrous Beaſt.

(3.) After, the ſupreme Authority was oft invaded by theſe who had no Title from any Relation to the Line of *Mahomet*. Theſe left the religious Part to the Deſcendents, under the old Name of *Caliphs*, or Vicars of the grand Prophet; and on them was beſtowed the Direction of all religious Concerns, with a plentiful Subſiſtence: From theſe their Emperors received Inveſtiture. In a little Time this Monarchy became too bulky to be governed by one Man, and therefore it was divided into ſeveral *Sultanies*, who made War amongſt themſelves. But the *Sultan* of *Perſia* rebelled againſt the *Caliph*, and ſeeing himſelf in Hazard to be run down by the other *Sultans* who adhered to the *Caliph*, about the Beginning of the tenth Century, called in the Aſſiſtance of the *Turks*, under the Command of *Tangrolipix*, by whoſe Aid he defeat his Enemies: But afterwards the *Turks*, on Diſobligations, real or alledged, turned their Arms againſt him, and ruined all *Perſia*. Theſe yielded to the *Mahometan* Principles, and were accepted by the *Caliph*, and waxed exceeding great, making continual Additions to this new Conqueſt; till *Tangrolipix* and his Poſterity fell out with the *Tartars*, who, in the Space of 300 Years, wormed out all that Race.

(4.) The *Selzuceian* Tribe of the *Turks* being thus waſted, the *Oguzion* Tribe became the greateſt, of whom *Ottoman* or *Oſman* was Chief, who in the thirteenth Century waged War with the *Tartars* with Succeſs; he was alſo moſt cruel to the *Chriſtians*. This Man laid the Foundation of the preſent *Turkiſh* Empire, whoſe *Grand Seigniours*, to this Day, value themſelves from the *Ottoman* Family their Original; ſo that for 400 Years that Family hath ſwayed the Imperial Sceptre over that huge Body called the *Turkiſh Empire*. But it would be noticed, that this Beaſt is not to be taken either for the *Arabians*, the firſt Sett of *Turks* the *Tartars*, or the laſt Sett of *Turks*; but the Emblem is to extend to all the *Mahometans*, whereſoever they obtain: So that this Beaſt will take in, not only the *Turks*, but the *Perſians*, *Indoſtans*, *Indians*, *Tartars*, and all the *Mahometans* in *Africa*, &c.

II. The comparative Account of this Beaſt, in the reſt of this Verſe: Where is a twofold Reſemblance, 1. To a Lamb. 2. To a Dragon. Two Creatures very unlike to one another, as we have heard from *Chap.* v. 6. *Chap.* xii. 3.

1. He is compared to a *Lamb* in his Horns, *He had two Horns like a Lamb.* It is not to be doubted, but by the Figure of a *Lamb*, in the former Part of this Prophecy, we are to underſtand *Jeſus Chriſt the Lamb of God*, whom we have often repreſented under this Emblem, as *Rev.* v. 6. *Rev.* vi. 1. and elſewhere; ſo that we muſt take it for certain, this Beaſt pretended to have ſomething in him that is really in Chriſt. But then the Difficulty is, Wherein did this Beaſt reſemble Chriſt? To be ſure,

not

not in the Number of his Horns; for it is ſaid, The Lamb had *ſeven Horns*, whereas this *Beaſt* has only *two*, and therefore muſt be far inferior to the Lamb, at leaſt as far as *two* is inferior to *ſeven*. I am unwilling to ſcan this, as it might be done but I am ſure it will be eaſily yielded the Proportion is very modeſt; yet I cannot think we are here to obſerve the Rule of Proportion. Again, as to the Nature of the Horns, it is only ſaid they were *like*, which will not infer any Equality, but on the contrary pleads an Unequality.

As to the Senſe of *Horns*, we had it before, both as to the true abſolute Senſe thereof, and when multiplied. But it is not ſo eaſy to apply this to *Mahomet*, eſpecially that I am ready to believe we are not to take two Horns for two ſucceſſive Governments, tho' it would be eaſy to find that; becauſe for the firſt 200 Years of that Impoſtor, the *Caliphat* and *Sultanie* were lodged in one Perſon, which they gave out, all that While, to be the inherent Right in the Heirs and Succeſſors of their imaginary Prophet: But after that Space of Time, the *Imperial Dignity* was ſeparate from the *Caliphat*, and exerciſed by diverſe Hands; but ſtill ſo, as he who had the Sword ruled him that had the *Alcoran*. This is what ſome called a Spiritual and a Civil Power; but I cannot find this juſtified from any Portion of Scripture. We will afterwards find the Heads ſucceſſive, and the Horns cotemporary. If we underſtand this of ſeveral Civil Powers, we will not find two of them for ſome Centuries after the Riſe of *Mahomet*; and if we carry it to his moſt flouriſhing State, we will meet with more: But ſtill they will not be like to the *Horns of the Lamb*, which we are ſpecially to keep in our Eye. Now the *Lamb of God* had three grand Offices as *Mediator*, viz. *Prophet, Prieſt, and King*; and from theſe, in a particular Manner, we may fetch the Deſignation of a *Lamb*: Whereas *Mahomet* ſet up only for two of them, *viz.* the *Prophetick* and *Kingly*: For ſo far as I can learn, he never meddled with the third, nor ſo much as dream'd thereof: And becauſe the firſt Exerciſe of theſe Powers were in a very ſmooth Manner, yet ſo, as ſtill pretend a Right to manage the Sword, which went a great deal further than the Book.

2. He is compared to a *Dragon* in his Voice, *He ſpake as a Dragon.* No doubt we are to take Dragon here in the ſame Senſe as *Chap.* xii. and there alſo we have the Speech of the Dragon, *v.* 10. *He accuſed the Saints before God, Day and Night.* Some make the Senſe of it, *He roared*; but 'tis not ſaid in *Chap.* xii. the Dragon *roared*, only *he ſpake* articulately, and intelligibly as a Legiſlator, and enjoin'd his Principles, however falſe, to his Followers, and inforced the Obſervation thereof. Here then I am called to give a Hint at theſe Methods uſed by the *Mahometans* to carry on their Principles, in as far as they agree with *Heatheniſm.*

(1.) If any Man was proſylited to their Religion, all his Children under the Age of Fourteen, were forced into their Meaſures by the moſt violent Methods.

(2.) If any Chriſtian, when drunk, promiſed to become of their Faith, or committed Uncleanneſs with any of their Women, he muſt either be Martyr or Apoſtate.

(3.) If but the Foundation of a Moſque be found in any Place, this is Ground for them to force the Inhabitants to their Meaſures, elſe they are to expect the hardeſt Treatment their Cruelty can deviſe.

(4.) They adapt the Nature of a future State, to all the ſenſual Conceptions the worſt of Men can be capable of, ſome of them unworthy of Chriſtian Ears. By this Method they prevailed with all the Libidinous to join them: And indeed the Nature of that Clime, and the Manner of Feeding, make this a moſt powerful Argument upon the Luſts of Men.

(5.) They gave it as a fundamental Article, that Succeſs is a ſure Mark of God's Approbation of the Means; and ſo, from their Proſperity, conclude God the Author of their Religion; and that they prevail in their Attempts, to be an infallible Evidence of God's Favour.

(6.) Another of their Principles is, That the Souls of theſe who die in the Wars againſt the *Infidels*, i. e. all but *Mahometans*, tho' they had not obſerved the *Mahometan* Law, or done any good Work, are immediately carried into *Paradiſe*; which has much animated the worſt of Men.

We need not ſtay to illuſtrate the Concordance of this with *Paganiſh* Maxims, for the moſt Part of them are exactly according to their Model; but if they agree in the Manner of the Speech, it is enough to anſwer the Text. This is plain, for both had heavy Certifications annexed to their Laws.

12 And he exerciſeth all the Power of the firſt Beaſt before him, and cauſeth the Earth, and them that dwell therein, to worſhip the firſt Beaſt, whoſe deadly Wound was healed.

13 And he doth great Wonders, ſo that he maketh Fire come down from Heaven on the Earth, in the Sight of Men.

In this Account of his Actions, we have, 1. The general Nature of his Exerciſe. 2. The Uſe of this made by him. 3. Wherein he excelled his general Power, and the Evidence thereof.

I. The general Account of his Exerciſe is pointed out to us, 1. In the Exemplar. 2. In the Manner of the Exerciſe.

1. We have the Exemplar, *All the Power of the firſt Beaſt.* I take the *firſt Beaſt* to be the *Papal Monarchy*; and here the *ſecond* is diſtinguiſhed from him, which proves them to be different, and not the ſame. The *Pope* by this Time had made conſiderable Advances, and with ſufficient Succeſs; nor could *Mahomet* deviſe a better Pattern. It is ſaid he had the *Power* or Authority of the firſt Beaſt; not that the firſt had loſt his, but he exerted an Equivalent. This is plain, for the Pope makes himſelf the Vicar of Chriſt, and Succeſſor of *Peter*. *Mahomet* makes himſelf the *Prophet of God*, which is plainly to uſurp one of the Offices of Chriſt: And the *Caliphs* of old, and the *Muſties* now, make themſelves the *Vicars* and *Succeſſors* of *Mahomet*; and theſe pay as much Reverence to their *Falſe Prophet*, as the Papiſts pay to Chriſt; for the one bowes at the Mention of *Mahomet*'s Name, as the other does at the Name of *Jeſus*. We had Authority before, *Chap.* xii. 2. the Senſe whereof will anſwer here.

2. The Manner of this Exerciſe, *He exerciſeth* this Power *before him*, or in his Sight. Some think this Expreſſion denotes Subjection and Dependence, and that the Agent eyes him before whom he acts. It cannot be refuſed, but often it occurs in Scripture in this Senſe; yet at other Times it ſignifies no ſuch Thing, but only in the View and Preſence of, as, *Luke* xii. 9. *He that denieth me before Men, him will I deny before the Angels in Heaven*: And in many other Places it is to be underſtood in the ſame Senſe; and ſo the Meaning may be, he did it in an open and publick Manner. If any add to the Comprehenſion of this Word, that he looked to the Beaſt as his Copy, I ſhall not oppoſe it. I offer theſe few Things therefore as the Senſe of it;

(1.) That the Pope had the Mortification to ſee himſelf imitated, and in ſome Things outdone, by one whom he curſt as an Infidel; for in 80 Years *Mahomet*'s Doctrine was as great a Length, as the Pope's was in 300 Years.

(2.) Thoſe Beaſts loaded one another with the hard Names of *Infidels*, &c. No doubt both of them ſpoke Truth; and, tho' otherwiſe wrong, right in this.

(3.) That this ſecond Beaſt did riſe and proſper, maugre all the Pope's Power and Influence; yea, many a Time he could hardly ſhift for himſelf.

(4.) That this ſecond Beaſt did copy after the firſt. This might be juſtified from a Multitude of Inſtances: I only name theſe five eſſential Articles of the *Mahometan* Faith, the very ſame with the Popiſh: As, 1. Their Waſhings and Purifications by conſecrated Water, *&c.* 2. Their Prayers, which they are to ſay five Times a Day; wherein they ape the Papiſts now, as well as the Phariſees of old; for they have them in the moſt publick Manner imaginable, both in the Streets, Moſques, *&c.* ſpreading their white Napkins, as the *Papiſts* pull out their Beads, when they begin. 3. Their Faſt of *Ramazan*, in the ninth Month of the *Arabian* Year; which is much a-kin to the Popiſh *Lent*, there are but a few Alterations: They eat nothing till Night; they call that Month holy, and the ſtrict Devotee adds a Fourthnight thereto, and ſo it is the Gage of the *Romiſh Lent*. 4. Their Charity or good Works, called *Zehat* or *Zacat*, by which every Man is obliged to give the hundredth Part of his Eſtate yearly for the Maintenance of the Poor; ſo that they are a great deal more modeſt than the Papiſts. 5. A Pilgrimage to *Mecca*, the Tomb of their Prophet, once a Year; which with them is a Piece of diſtinguiſhing Piety, and incumbent on all who are able to bear the Charges of ſuch a Journey, if they are not otherwiſe imployed by their *Sultans*. This alſo they have borrowed from the Papiſts, who make their Pilgrimages meritorious; with this Difference, whereas the *Mahometans* have but one Place to which they reſort, the Papiſts have a great many.

As for their other Ordinances, *viz.* of Circumciſion, the Obſervation of the ſixth Day of the Week, or *Friday*, for their publick Devotions; Abſtenance from Wine, Swines Fleſh, *&c.* they are only Proofs of their Obedience to the foreſaid five Laws, but not abſolutely neceſſary in themſelves.

II. The

II. The Uſe made of this Power, which, in a Word, is to agrandize the Pope: But, that we may have a clearer View of it, I ſhall conſider theſe few Things in the Words;

1. The Object, *The firſt Beaſt, whoſe deadly Wound was healed*: Which cannot be underſtood of any other than that *Beaſt* explained in the firſt Part of this Chapter; and therefore we are to mean thereby the Papal Kingdom.

2. The Subject, or who were to regard this Beaſt, *The Earth, and them that dwell therein.* I ſhall give the Meaning of this by two Exceptions: 1. We are not here to comprehend the Followers of *Mahomet*, for he never cauſed them to own the Pope: And conſequently this is not to be meant of *Aſia*, ſtrictly taken in Oppoſition to *Europe*, as we had it before. 2. We are alſo to except from this, *all thoſe whoſe Names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.* And conſequently this is to be meant of all carnal and earthly Men, whether in *Europe*, &c. including the groſſer Sort of Profeſſors of the Chriſtian Religion, as we ſhall ſee afterwards.

3. The Regard paid by theſe Perſons to the firſt Beaſt, *They worſhipped the ſame.* This was explained, *v.* 4. and 8. of this Chapter.

4. The impelling Cauſe, He *cauſed* or made. This to be ſure is the Act of the Beaſt that roſe out of Earth; ſo that the plain Senſe is, *Mahomet* cauſed the Throng of the World to own and ſubmit to the *Pope*. This ſeems to be an hard Saying, for it was evidently croſs his Intereſt ſo to do; and no doubt he rather endeavoured to break than ſupport the Papal Power: But this ſeeming Paradox will evaniſh after a few Conſiderations;

(1.) It is not ſaid that this ſecond Beaſt made any Laws, or publiſhed any Edicts to this Purpoſe, which certainly would have weakned his own Intereſt, and diſconcerted all his Meaſures; Nor do we ever read of any ſuch Thing: And ſo we may not underſtand this of any plain Deſign, or direct Method taken by this *Beaſt* in Favours of the firſt; but that indirectly and eventually the Meaſures of the *Mahometans* tended to the Greatning of the Popiſh Intereſt. For,

(2.) The growing Power of the *Mahometan* Deluſion, in leſs than an hundred Years, ſpread its Conqueſts ſo far, that all the Princes of *Europe* were alarmed, and doubted whereunto theſe Bodings would grow; and were forced to yield to the repeated Calls of the *Romiſh Pontiff*, and arm againſt the common Enemy of Chriſtianity; which that they might do with the more Probability, ſent their ſeveral Commiſſioners or Plenipotentiaries to *Rome*, or where the Popes appointed their Councils to be held, that they might take a joint Courſe. By this Method many Princes, otherwiſe averſe to the Papal Supremacy, were brought in Subjection to him, for their own Safety; and yield that the Pope, as oft as he pleaſed, ſhould leavy prodigious Sums out of their Dominions, for the Support of what they called the *Holy War*; and to grant conſiderable Reinforcements to his Armies, and theſe in Conjunction with him. This turned into Cuſtom, which the Pope knew well how to improve, and therefore laid Projects to ſupport the ſame, long after the *Saracens* were expelled *Europe*; and at length gained ſo far on ſovereign Princes, as oblige them to go in Perſon on theſe Expeditions, and to take with them all the Forces they could raiſe of their own, or procure from their Neighbours. This Method had two notable Effects to the Pope's Advantage; 1. He thereby drained their Coffers of Money, and ſo kept them low, that they might not have Acceſs to enquire after him, and his Way of Working. 2. If any *Prince* appeared, whoſe Wiſdom or Courage he feared, immediately he was ſent to the *Holy Wars*, in which many of the greateſt in *Europe* periſhed.

(3.) At this Time, thro' the Power and Policy of the *Pope*, the Power and Life of Religion was worm'd out, and, in Room thereof, came a ſuperſtitious Conceit of other Things which had no Religion in them; as the Excellency of the holy Sepulchre, the holy City, *&c.* And it was given out as the moſt meritorious Thing, to get them out of the Hands of theſe Infidels poſſeſſed of them: And, as a Motive to carnal Men, propoſed the great Encreaſe of their Power, by having the moſt fertile and pleaſant Part of the Earth added to their Dominions, promiſing them certain Succeſs; which for a Time falling out, made our *Europians* ſo very fond of this War, that, tho' their Men and Treaſures were from Time to Time exhauſted, they were ſtill ready to renew their Efforts; And indeed, as One obſerves, againſt all the Rules of good Policy: But were encouraged to theſe deſperate Enterprizes, by the Pope's Grants in their Favours, and great Names beſtowed on them; yet, in the mean Time, he got his own Yoke the more firmly wreathed about their Necks, and became Maſter of their Purſes and Conſciences at once.

(4.) The poor Chriſtians in *Greece*, *Leſſer Aſia*, *Paleſtine*, &c. tho' they diſdain'd the *Papal* Yoke, yet willingly contribute their Aſſiſtance to the *European* Armies;

hoping thereby, at Length, to get rid of the prevailing *Mahometan* Power, and ſo enjoy the full and free Exerciſe of their Religion. Yet all ended in this, that when the Armies from *Europe* were cut off, as happened many a Time, or were conſumed with Famine or Plague, the *Mahometans* wreck'd their Spight upon the *Greek* and *Aſiatick* Chriſtians, till they were brought very low. Thus the Pope had the Satisfaction to ſee theſe Churches deſtroyed by Infidels, who would not ſubmit to his blaſphemous Power; ſo that, in the Courſe of a few Centuries, moſt of the Chriſtians in theſe Places were conſumed by the *Barbarians*, who alſo ruined the Eaſtern Empire at *Conſtantinople*, and all the Chriſtians almoſt in the whole World, by theſe Methods, were brought in Subjection to *Rome*.

III. We have wherein he excelled his general Power, and ſo outdid the firſt Beaſt, *v.* 13. *He doth Wonders*, &c. This has moved the Throng of Expoſitors to underſtand this ſecond Beaſt of *Rome Antichriſtian*, becauſe we read of no Miracles done by *Mahomet*, or his Succeſſors the *Caliphs*; whereas the Church of *Rome* boaſt much of the Miracles wrought by their *Saints, Relicts*, &c. And we read, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 9. *that Antichriſt's Coming is to be after the Manner of Satan, with all Power, and Signs, and lying Words.*

I own this Difficulty is not ſmall, yet I cannot ſay it is ſo great as force me from the given Expoſition of this Emblem. We meet with Expreſſions much a-kin to this, *Chap.* xi. 5. and aſcribed to the *two Witneſſes*, where I proved they are not to be taken literally, without marring the whole Senſe of the Prophecy, in that Place; and this, by Conſent of all, at leaſt the far greater Part of Expoſitors. But, how it ſhould be taken in a proper Senſe here, more than in that Place, where the Agents had the *God of Heaven* on their Side, I ſee not. Beſides, if we apply it to the Papal Power, I know not how they will make it out; for there is but one Sign particularly mentioned, the *bringing Fire down from Heaven*, which I ſee no where verified of *Papiſts*, tho' indeed they deafen the World with the Noiſe of their Miracles. But, as One remarks, We have no Authority for the Truth of theſe Miracles, but their Prieſts Word; and they are uſually given out to be done in ſuch remote Places, that we cannot eaſily trap them, which is moſt ſuſpicious. Nor ſee I how with any Shadow of Reaſon it can be underſtood of the Pope's Excommunication-Bulls, which, however terrible to ſome devoted to their Superſtition, were little regarded by others. Beſides, this is a metaphorical Expreſſion, according to them, and can in no Senſe be called proper; for the Word properly ſignifies a *Sign*, wihch has many Significations: And in a prophetick Stile, which is to be uſed here, it ſignifies any Thing that is terrible and uncouth; thus we read, *Jer.* vi. 1. of *a Sign of Fire to be ſet up*, which was no doubt to affright their Enemies, and chaſe them away. And ſo, it is ſaid, *Judg.* xx. 38. *An appointed Sign of Fire was given by the* Iſraelites *to their Brethren*; which was nothing leſs or more than the ſetting *Gibeah* on Fire. And this did quite diſpirit the *Benjamites*. Now, how may we not underſtand this Sign of Fire to be ſome prodigious and unexpected Calamity, in the Courſe of War, wrought by this ſecond Beaſt, I cannot imagine; unleſs it be, that it is ſaid, he brings *this Fire out of Heaven*; when yet it is moſt preſumeable, it came from the Earth: As we read of the Deſtruction of *Sodom*, that *Fire came from Heaven*; yet, it is generally thought, theſe Cities were overturned by the Eruption of ſome *Bituminous Mines*, kindled by the Command of God, and therefore ſaid to be from Heaven; But, becauſe of its Appearance, and the immediate Hand of God in it, it is ſaid to *come from Heaven*: So *Job* received Intelligence, *Job* i. 16. *The Fire of God fell from Heaven upon his Sheep*; Yet we are ſure Satan was the Author of it.

Upon the Whole, I am ready to believe, by theſe *Signs* of Fire, we are to underſtand theſe Terrors that *Mahomet* in his cruel Conqueſts ſtruck the Minds of Men with, in burning Cities, laying waſte Countries, and the terrible Slaughters he made all round him, done ſo ſuddenly, impetuouſly and forcibly, that it looked like a Stroke immediately from Heaven. But, to underſtand this general Senſe, I ſhall conſider, 1. The general Account of this Work. 2. The particular Inſtance. 3. The Notoriety of it.

In the general, it is ſaid, *He doth Wonders*, and *great* Wonders or Signs, *i. e.* he performeth wonderful Exploits, and what might exceed Faith; for ſuch was the Riſe and Progreſs of the *Mahometan* Religion, which, from ſo ſmall a Beginning, made ſo unexpected an Advance: Eſpecially, if we conſider how croſs to Reaſon the Principles were upon which they went; and how variouſly gathered, ſome from *Chriſtianity*, ſome from *Judaiſm*, and not a few from *Paganiſm*. And it was certainly one of the Depths of Satan, to eſtabliſh as a fundamental Principle, that he was ſent to confirm his Miſſion by a conſtant Courſe of Succeſs and Proſperity, in Place of all the Miracles wrought

wrought by *Moſes* and Chriſt; which he and his Followers improved to the great Advantage of their Cauſe. This they gave out to be the Finger of God with them in all they did, tho' it be in itſelf a moſt prepoſterious Way of Reaſoning, and will prove as much for the plain Kingdom of Satan, as either of Mahometaniſm or Popery.

2. The Inſtance, *He made Fire to come down from Heaven*: The probable Senſe of this we confirmed from Scripture; and I take it to point at that dreadful Havock made by this Beaſt, of all he aſſaulted: For never was the Foundation of any Government ſo ſock'd in Blood, *&c.* as this.

3 The Notoriety of the Thing, *In the Sight of Men*, v. 12. *before him*; ſo that it was not by Hearſay, but really done in View, and maugre all the Oppoſition they could make thereto. And many a Time, ſays a learned Hiſtorian, "They anticipate the "Report of their Coming, by their Actions, and thereby ſtruck Terror into the "Minds of all." Which another ſays, "Contributed much to the Propagation of "their falſe Faith."

There is next the Hiſtory of this ſecond Beaſt, in which we find a ſpecial Eye to the firſt, *v.* 14, 15, 16, 17. Where we may notice, 1. How he impoſed upon the Earth to ſet up the Likeneſs of the Pope, *v.* 14. 2. The Powers of this Image of the Pope, *v.* 15. 3. His penal Statutes, comprehending the Terms of Communion, *v.* 16, 17.

14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the Earth by the Means of thoſe Miracles which he had Power to do in the Sight of the Beaſt; ſaying to them that dwell on the Earth, That they ſhould make an Image to the Beaſt, which had the Wound by a Sword, and did live.

Here we have, 1. The Deluſion of the World by this Beaſt. 2. In what, or how far he impoſed upon the Men of the Earth.

I. There is the Deluſion occaſioned by his Signs, *He deceiveth them that dwell on the Earth, by thoſe Signs were given him to do before the Beaſt.* This is the Reading cloſs to the *Greek*, and differs nothing from our Tranſlation, tho' ſome incline to make Work about the Reading; 'tis plain their Seduction was owing to his Wonders, and being thus cozen'd, the World was then fit for any Thing; for *one Deluſion always paths the Way to another.* I own indeed, that Clauſe in our Tranſlation might be guarded better, where it is ſaid, *He had Power*; for in the *Greek* it is, *It was given to him*, which is a great deal ſofter than the other: But we explained both above, as alſo all the other Words in this Clauſe.

II. How far he impoſed upon theſe Men of the World, or the Men that dwell on the Earth (of which ſee on *v.* 12.) or to what he brought them, *Saying to them, that they ſhould make an Image to the Beaſt*, &c. The plain Senſe of this is, the *Impoſture* adviſed and perſwaded them to make the Likeneſs or Similitude of the Papacy. Where we would a little notice, 1. Who were to make this. 2. What they were to make. 3. After what Pattern.

1. Who were to make this Image, *Theſe that dwell on the Earth*; i. e. the godleſs Part of *Aſia*; which ſhews us, whatever is pretended, the whole Medly of Error and Prophanity among the *Mahometans*, is of humane Invention, yea is not the Deed of the grand Impoſture: But, by others, this is very plain from the Confuſion his Diſciples were in, on the Death of their falſe Prophet; and indeed their Diviſions were like to be as fatal to them, as of old it prov'd to the Builders of *Babylon*: For *Mahomet* died with out-naming his Succeſſor, and thereupon the two Cities of *Mecca* and *Medina* contended about the Succeſſion; and one being propoſed from each, the whole Multitude were divided betwixt them, and both of them were ſtiff'd for their ſeveral Perſons with great Contention, which at Length was huſh'd, and *Abubeker* Father-in-law to *Mahomet*, was owned as *Caliph* or *Vicar* to *Mahomet*: But *Ali*, *Mahomet*'s Couſin-german, was diſatisfied, thinking the Honour belonged to himſelf; which, however, by many Threats, and ſome Force, he was obliged to renounce, at leaſt ſeem to do ſo. And thus Matters were in ſome Meaſure compoſed, but ſtill the Spirits of the ſeveral Factions boiled againſt one another.

2. What they were to make, *An Image*, εἰκων which properly ſignifies an impreſſed Repreſentation, as, *Mat.* xxii. 20. *Whoſe Image is this?* So that it is not an Idol, as ſome would have, tho' indeed it proved one, but a Reſemblance; and ſo it differs, 1. from a Type, which has nothing of the Nature of the Thing, but is a bare Signification thereof by Inſtitution; whereas the Image has a Likeneſs in Nature, at leaſt in Appearance unto the Thing. Thus the Apoſtle diſtinguiſheth betwixt *Shadow* and

Image, Heb. 10. 1. *The Law having a Shadow of good Things to come, and not the very Image of the Things.* But here there is a substantial Likeness, as there is betwixt two Things, which are very like one to another. In the same Sense we have the Word, *Col.* i. 15. *Who is the Image of the invisible God*; so that there must be a thorow Agreement betwixt the *Pattern* and the *Production*. 2. It differs from the Thing whereof it is the Image. It would be a most improper Expression, to say, a Thing is the Image of itself; yet all fall into this Blunder, who would have this Beast the same with the former; for whatever Likeness be betwixt them, there is no Sameness.

3. The Pattern according to which this Image was made, *The Beast which had the Wound by the Sword and did live.* This can be none else, but that Beast we had in the Beginning of the Chapter, the *Papacy*. We have an Addition here we had not before; for, it is said, he was wounded *by a Sword*: Whatever Sense we take Sword in, it answers to the given Sense, *v.* 3. for, if we take it for the Word of God, then the Beast was condemned by a Synod at *Constantinople*, judging according to the Word of God. If we take it for an Emblem of Authority, then it appeared, several Emperors interposed their Authority. The Words then being plain, I make only this Reflection therefrom, That while the Spirit of God is speaking of this *Arabian* Monster, he does not point at the same in its first Spring under *Mahomet*, who died *Anno* 631, but it respects some Time after that, when they had moulded the *Alcoran* as the Rule, and laid down the Maxims of their State, which consumed near 50 Years; and so it will fall in with the End of the seventh Century, which was after the Beast was both wounded and healed, and when the World was wondring after the same; and so the Application of these two Parts of this Prophecy keep exact Harmony together. That we may further illustrate and confirm this, it will be necessary we enquire into the Resemblance betwixt the Kingdoms of *Popery* and *Mahometanism*: We before pointed at the Harmony of their Doctrines, and now we touch at their Government in these few Particulars;

(1.) We begin with the Head of that *Faction*, which we will find in the same Condition the *Papists* have put their *Popes*: For he has both the sacred and civil Power of the whole lodged in his Person, and at his Devotion, and can dispose of both at Pleasure. *Mahomet* himself arrogate to him the Character of *the Prophet of God*, or *the Apostle of God*, which none of his Successors, as far as I find, ever medled with; but they design themselves *Successors* or *Vicars*, which is the Sense of the Word *Caliph*; just as the *Pope* designs himself *Vicar* of Christ, and *Successor* of *Peter*. After that they designed themselves *Emperors of the Believers*, and so all Kings and Princes of their Principles, were their Subjects; just as the *Pope* in a proud Manner calls *Emperors* and *Kings* his *Sons*, and did in a very brisk Manner command them too. Thus it continued among the *Saracens*, whatever Dissentions were in that great Body, the Head was still owned, till the *Turks* of the *Selucian* Tribe defeat them, and curtail'd the Power of their *Calipth*, and seperate betwixt the *Caliphat* and the *Emperial Dignity*. In the Midle of the tenth Century, the *Tartars* routed the *Turks*, and tho' they pay'd great respect to the *Caliph*, whose chief Residence was at *Bagdal*, yet the civil Power was exercised by another: This lasted till the other Tribe of *Turks* called the *Oguzian*, did prevail against the *Tartars* under the Direction of *Othoman*, and set up that *Turkish Empire* about the End of the thirteenth Century, which continues to this Day. The *Persians* who before this had fallen in with *Mahometan* Principles, used prudent Measures to save themselves from the *Turks* their powerful Neighbours; and therefore, tho' they owned *Mahomet*, would not submit to the *Caliphs* amongst them, but lodged all the religious Power in their *Sophi* or *Emperor*. Just as some Nations who with drew their Obedience from the *Pope*, lodged all that Power in their *Kings*, used to be in the *Pope*, tho' with as little Reason. The *Turks* on the other Hand, having rid themselves of *Caliphs*, that they might have an high *Pontiff* in Imitation of the *Romans*, created a new Officer in Religion upon the Decay of *Caliphs*, whom they called the *Grand Mufti*, who is as great amongst the *Turks*, if they please the Emperors, as the *Pope* is in the Church of *Rome*; and to shew they believe their *Mufti* to be the Image of the *Pope*, they commonly design the *Pope* the Christian or *Roman Mufti*.

(2.) We will find among the *Mahomitans* an Hierarchy not unlike to that of *Rome*: For they have their *Emes*, a religious Set of Men, in Character; but being idle and well provided, are ordinarly very wicked. These claim Relation to their great Prophet, and to be descended from the ancient *Caliphs*, as the *Popish Bishops* contend to be the Successors of the Apostles. Amongst these are some of a superior Order, like to *Archbishops*, called by the Name *Esergi*: Below these is another Order called *Emaums*, like the Popish Rectors, Deans, &c. and are more or less regarded, as they have larger or smaller Benefices. But there is a much greater Variety of their Church-mens Orders amongst the *Persians* than the *Turks*.

(3.) Among

(3.) Among the *Mahometans* they have *religious Houſes*, as among the Papiſts; ſome of which are very rich, and capable to aliment Numbers, whoſe Buſineſs is the ſame with the *Romiſh Convents*, to pray for the Souls of ſuch as are dead, and have Need of Prayers.

(4.) They have a great Variety of *Sects* and *Orders* among the *Mahometans*, as the Papiſts have; yea, they are ſo numerous, that ſome Travellers compute Odds of ſeventy different Orders: Here they copy exactly after the Papiſts.

(5.) Their Worſhip is very like that of the Papiſts, as their diſtinguiſhing Garbs, as Scarlet, Blue, or any other high Colour: They have a vaſt Number of idle Ceremonies, particularly a humble Bow at the Name of *Mahomet*, as the Papiſts do at the Name *Jeſus*. Their Prayers are alſo all *Liturgical*, compoſed by their great Doctors.

(6.) They are very like the Church of *Rome* in a great many other Things, too tedious to relate, as the Jeſuitick Doctrine of Diſſimulation, eſpecially among the *Perſians*: Profaning the holy Bond of Marriage; for, tho' they do not prohibite Marriage to any except their *Muſti*, who has all the Power of the *Pope*, and in this is very like him; yet they indulge all Polygamy, which is as croſs the Rule on the one Hand, as the *Papiſts* are on the other; for they allow every Man four Wives.

15 And he had Power to give Life unto the Image of the Beaſt, that the Image of the Beaſt ſhould both ſpeak, and cauſe that as many as would not worſhip the Image of the Beaſt, ſhould be killed.

Here we have the Power of this Image of the Pope, where we have, 1. The Principle. 2. The Diſcoveries of this Principle of Action.

I. There is the Principle of Action, where we may notice, 1. The Cauſe. 2. The Effect. For both help to give Light.

1. The Cauſe, *He had Power to give*, or rather, *It was given to him to give*; for this is Word for Word. To be ſure, the Cauſe, who had this quickning Faculty, is no other than that *ſecond Beaſt* which roſe out of the Earth, *i. e.* the riſing and growing *Saracen Empire*, who were at this Time moulding themſelves after the Form of *Popery*, and had made no ſmall Progreſs this Way; no Doubt it was given the ſame Way we explained before, *i. e.* by the Divine Permiſſion, and Satan's Influence.

2. The Effect, *He gave Life unto the Image of the Beaſt.* Hitherto their Form of Government was but a lifeleſs Lump, and unactive; and was more in Project than Performance. But there is beſtowed upon this lifeleſs Image, *Life* or *Breath* (as it is in the Margin) or which is better than both, *Spirit*, πνεῦμα. There are ſeveral and different Acceptations of this Word in Scripture, the Ranging of which would afford little Light to this Paſſage; the Text itſelf ſeems plainly to direct to its proper Meaning here, *viz.* ſuch a Spirit as fits for Speaking and Action: We had ſuch a Spirit before, Chap. xi. 11. *The Spirit of Life from God entred into them*, i. e. the *Witneſſes*. It is true, there is as great a Difference betwixt theſe Spirits, as there is betwixt the Perſons that were animate by them: But that may give Light to this, having a juſt Regard to *God* the Author of the firſt Spirit, and the Prophets in whom he entred; and the *ſecond Beaſt* the Author of this Spirit, and the Image of the Beaſt quickned thereby. We have Spirit taken in the ſame Senſe in other Places of Scripture, *Luke* 8. 55. *Her Spirit came again, and ſhe ſtraightway aroſe.*

II. There are the Diſcoveries of this Principle of Action, in theſe two,

1. The Image of the Beaſt ſpoke. What this Speech was, we explained above, *v.* 5. And no doubt, as he was like the Beaſt in other Things, ſo he would copy after him, and utter both Laws and Blaſphemies, as we have them in the *Alcoran*; which, when conſidered, will be found a mere Hotch-potch of Blaſphemies.

2. Is his Action, *To cauſe that as many as would not worſhip the Image of the Beaſt, ſhould be killed.* This diſcovers what the Nature of that Spirit was, a very wicked and murdering one. As for *Worſhip*, it was explained, *v.* 8. and the other Terms ſince. In this the *Image* of the Beaſt is very like the firſt Beaſt; for both *Papiſts* and *Mahometans* propagate their Faith by the Sword, Fire, and Fagot; both of them inveterate Enemies to the *People* of *God*, and both condemn without Hearing. All which is contrary, not only to the *Word of God*, but to *Reaſon itſelf.* They have a Rule many a Time inculcate in their *Alcoran*, Chap. 9. *Make War upon all your Neighbours for the Propagation of the Truth* (ſo they call their Doctrine) *and compel them either to become Mahometans or Tributaries*; but more expreſs, Chap 8. where they are commanded *to fight, till all People be of their Religion.* This Method of theirs is called, *The holy War*; juſt as the Papiſts call their Expedition againſt the *Mahometans* by the ſame Name. But the Harmony of theſe two Beaſts will appear the

better, that we compare their Edicts together, which I ſhall only do in one Inſtance: Pope *Martine* V. emitted a Bull to the Council of *Conſtance*, againſt the poor *Waldenſes* and *Albigenſes*, in theſe Words, *Prohibentur illi domicilia tenere, larem fovere, contractum inire, negotiationes quaſdam exercere, aut humanitatis ſolatia cum Chriſti fidelibus habere.* Nor have the *Turks* or *Mahometans* been behind them in theſe Severities; for in the Chapter of the *Alcoran*, called the Chapter of *Battle*, we have theſe remarkable Words, *Where you meet with Infidels, cut off their Heads, kill them, take them Priſoners, bind them until you think fit to give them Liberty, or pay their Ranſom, and forbear not to perſecute them 'till they have laid down their Arms and ſubmitted.* One would be tempted to think the *Pope* had borrowed his Interdiction *againſt* the Proteſtants from the *Alcoran*, only that his Bull has it in other Words, but both of them are to the ſame Purpoſe.

16 And he cauſeth all, both Small and Great, Rich and Poor, Free and Bond, to receive a Mark on their Right-hand, or in their Foreheads:

17 And that no Man might buy or ſell, ſave he that had the Mark, or the Name of the Beaſt, or the Number of his Name.

This is plainly the Beaſt's Act of Uniformity, and proper Conditions ſtipulate, with the Vengeance of a heavy Sanction. And if it ſhould be enquired what Beaſt this belongs to, there is a ready Anſwer, it belongs to both: For the *Second* we have ſeen copied all along after the *Firſt*. And we are not to expect them to be ſeparate, eſpecially that this Hiſtory is deſigned of the *Second*, and yet the *Beaſt* ſimply named; which we may well underſtand of the *firſt*, becauſe ſo often mentioned as the Exemplar of the *ſecond*; and the rather we find theſe two brought in as one, becauſe to be ſure of the Reſemblance, Chap. xx. 4. where we read of the *Beaſt* and his *Image*, and of the ſame Articles mentioned here, *viz.* the Mark in their Hands or Foreheads. As for the Extent of his Power, *Over ſmall and great, rich and poor*, &c. It ſeems to exhibite to us the Univerſality of their Juriſdiction, which indeed, in their Day, extended betwixt them to the whole known Parts of the Earth, and to all Ranks and Degrees of Perſons, from the Sovereign on the Throne, to the meaneſt Slave. Another Conſideration I offer to fortify this, is, That both of them, as we have ſeen, roſe about the ſame Time, and by the like Methods: As alſo their Fall will be preciſely at the ſame Time, *Chap.* xix. 20. The Harmony of their Principles and Practiſes plead for this, that the Concluſion belongs to both. I foreſee indeed many Difficulties in the Explication and Application of what we meet with afterwards in this Chapter; yet not greater than theſe that oppreſs the Sentiments of theſe learned Perſons, who are ſo kind to the *falſe Prophet*, and ſo hard upon the *Papal Kingdom*, as lodge the whole upon the laſt, to the total Exemption of the firſt, altho' they be perfectly equal in Guilt. We are then to conſider in theſe two Verſes, 1. The Evidence required from all theſe Sorts of Perſons, of their Subjection to the Beaſts, or the Articles of Communion, or theſe Terms upon which they were to be admitted into their Communion. 2. The Certification, if they wanted theſe, they could neither buy nor ſell with them.

I. There is the Evidences of the Subjection of all theſe before-named Ranks of Perſons to the Beaſts.

1. The firſt Evidence is, *He cauſeth them to receive a Mark on their Right-hand, or their Foreheads.* While it is ſaid, He *cauſeth*, or *maketh*, this plainly declares his great Force and Power, which they were not able to reſiſt; and ſo there was no free Communing, but they were conſtrained to accept the Terms offered to them, for he left no Room for Reaſoning. Which is yet more plain from the accurate Reading of the reſt of the Words, which will run thus, *He ordered that a Mark be given, or that he gave a Mark*: Where we are to view the Badge, and where it was to be carried.

The Badge, called a *Mark*. No doubt the ſame is to be ſaid of the other two mentioned, *v.* 17. and the rather that they come in altogether, mentioned after the ſame Way: And ſo the Meaning is, they were to have one of the three.

There is no ſmall Stir made about the Word *Mark*, χάραγμα. We have this Word rendred *engraven*; *We are not to think that the Godhead is like unto Gold--graven by Art.* It differs from *Character*, which hath Similitude or Likeneſs in it. In *profane Authors* this Word ſignifies the Mark of Property, that People uſe to put upon their Beſtial, or Houſhold-furniture, that it may be known to whom it belongs; every one having a different Mark. It is credibly related, that the Eaſtern Nations, eſpecially in *Syria*, &c. did mark their Soldiers or Slaves in their Wreſts or Hands, by an indelible Mark:

Mark: And if one ſo marked ſhould run away from his Proprietor, and be received by another into Service, it was reckoned as bad as Theft or Robbery. I ſhall not refuſe but there may be ſome Alluſion to theſe Cuſtoms; but to fetch the full Senſe from thence, would be very uncertain. I do think it a great deal more modeſt, to allow the *Spirit of God* here to allude to ſome Expreſſions in the *Old Teſtament*, than to Heatheniſh Cuſtoms, which we find God moſt averſe from; and ſo it will ſignify both a Teſt and a Memorial, which will caſt up in the next Place, where it was carried *on their Right-hand or Forehead.* So we find, when God is delivering to the *Iſraelites* the Doctrine of the *Paſſover*, and directing them in the Celebration thereof, from the Occaſion on which it was inſtitute, and orders them to inſtruct their Children therein, he adds, *Exod.* xiii. 3,---9. *It ſhall be for a Sign unto thee upon thy Hand, and for a Memorial between thine Eyes.* Which certainly ſignifies neither leſs nor more (whatever ſenſleſs and ſuperſtitious Cuſtoms did afterwards creep into the Church) than that the conſtant and avowed Profeſſion and Practice of the Commandments of God, ſhould diſcriminate them from all the Nations of the Earth. Again, *Solomon* ſays, *Prov.* vi. 21. *Thou ſhalt bind them continually upon thy Heart, and tie them about thy Neck.* i. e. They ſhould love the *Law of God*, and reckon their Compliance therewith, as their greateſt Ornament. There ſeems to be a further Alluſion in this Place to what we had, Chap. vii. 3. about *ſealing the Servants of God in their Foreheads*: Which we find reſumed again in the Begining of the following Chapter. Hence we ſee *Satan*'s Cunning, to ape God in all Things as near as he can: And ſo the Meaning of this Place will caſt up to be, that this Impoſture ſhould have Methods to inſure to himſelf Diſciples, by ſome obvious and apparent Thing in their Principles and Practices, that ſhould diſtinguiſh them from all others. And there will be no Need of flying to external Badges, or Characters of Diſtinction. A great many Senſes I paſs the Examination of, becauſe they make no Alluſion to any Paſſage in Scripture, except one, who, by the *Mark on the Right-hand*, underſtand ſolemn Engagements they take of their Votaries, becauſe the lifting up of the Right-hand is an old Rite in *Swearing*. If this be added to the former, the Senſe will be the more extenſive.

I own there is Force in that Objection againſt this Senſe, That in all theſe Scriptures there is a Copulative; whereas here there is the Alternative *or*, in their Hand, *or* their Forehead; which ſays, it was not needful to be in both, ſo it was in either. Some have a dexterous Way of ſolving this Difficulty, by telling us the *Conjunction ἢ* is to be here rendred *and*, which is a bold Stroke, unleſs they had juſtified it from Scripture: And ſeeing they do not, we are not raſhly to leave the common Senſe of this little Word. The eaſieſt Way of anſwering it is from the *Mahometan* Principles, which diſpenſe with all the five eſſential Articles of their Religion, provided a Man *fight* ſtoutly for the advancing of the Faith: So, if we take this for the Mark on the Right-hand, they maintain ſuch will go immediately to *Paradiſe*. Now, what is this elſe than the Popiſh Principle, That a Man will be ſaved were he never ſo wicked, if he lay out himſelf for the Service of *Mother Church*, and cut off *Hereticks*, no Matter how. Again, among the *Mahometans*, they have their *Derviſhes*, or *Santo's*, who can do nothing but run the Round in the Fooleries of their Devotion, to all whom *Mahomet* has opened the Gates of Paradiſe. In this alſo they ſymbolize with the *Papiſts*, who make *voluntary Poverty, perpetual Chaſtity*, and *Canonical Obedience*, to their Regulars, to be meritorious; which, in ſo many Words, are expreſly the Sentiments of the *Derviſhes* among the *Mahometans*, who alſo maintain a *middle State* for departed Souls, which they call *Araf*, a Word in their Language which ſignifies *Separation*, becauſe it is a State diſtinct from both the Saved and Damned, and make it to be the Lot of thoſe whoſe Merits cannot carry them to *Paradiſe*, yet whoſe Sins are not ſo groſs as ſink them to *Hell*, (here alſo is the Doctrine of venial Sin) however, they believe, at the general Judgment, what by the Prayers of the Living for them while in that Condition, and what by their own Carriage while there, they will be admitted to Paradiſe. It is the more to be noticed, that the Notion of *Araf* is not original to the *Mahometans*, nor is there one Word about it in their *Alcoran*; but they even borrowed that, as they did other Things, from the *Papiſts*. There is alſo another Order among the *Mahometans*, like the Popiſh *itinerant Prieſts*, who, under the Notion of Preaching, and propagating the Faith, travel every where, and lick up all the Intelligence they can, which they communicate to their Conſtituents, for which they are commonly well rewarded: Theſe Perſons are much adicted to *Liger de main*, and ſome of them to *Sorcery*. It is plain that all theſe either defend or promote their falſe Principles, and ſo may be ſaid to have the Mark upon their Right-hand, or Forehead.

The 2d Term of Communion which we are to regard alſo, as a Badge of their Subjection, is *v.* 17. *Or the Name of the Beaſt.* I take *Beaſt* to comprehend both the *firſt*

and *second Beast*, as was said above, which we have also coupled together, Chap. xiv. 11. *The Beast and his Image.* Some think, no more is intended but their passing under the general Designation of *Papists*, or *Mahometans*, from the *Pope*, or *Mahomet*; as *Christians* are called after *Christ*: Yet I comprehend more is couched up in this. And to follow what I laid down in the first, the *Devil*'s Ambition to copy after *God*, out of Envy, will take Place here. Now, we know it is one of the greatest Attainments of the Saints, *to have the Name of God written on them*: So it is promised, *Rev.* iii. 12. which to be sure is more than to be externally designed by him, because it was the Privilege of that poor, patient, faithful, and wrestling Church of *Philadelphia*: And on that Place I shew'd from Scripture it pointed at a *subjective Likeness* unto God, in being made Partakers of his Nature, which is the highest Attainment we can propose to ourselves. Let us but take this as the Reverse of that, and our Difficulty will be over; And so the Sense is, they must be like the Beast in Nature, of the same Spirit, with him: But while it is proposed as a Term of Communion, somewhat more seems to be in it; As, 1. That they hold all the Power of Authority they exercise, of the Beast: For to do a Thing in the Name of one, is the same as to do it by their Commission and Will. This is a Scripture-Sense of the Word, By *what Name have ye done this*? Acts iv. 7. So it is expressly required, that all *Edicts*, *Bulls*, *Constitutions*, &c. go out in the Name of the *Pope* among the *Papists*. And the same obtains among the *Mahometans*; for all their Orders come out in the Name of their great *Prophet* and his *Successors*. 2. That they bind and engage themselves to the Beast. This is also a Scripture-phrase; I will *lift up my Hands in thy Name*, Psal. liii. 4. and, *I will go on in Name of the Lord*, *i. e.* I will solemnly engage myself unto him. This is true of both the Beasts, who require strict Ties from their Followers, to make them faithful and constant to them.

It may be enquired here, Wherein does this Article differ from the former? As I explained the first, there is a plain Difference. Tho' I did not reject the auxiliary Thought of a learned Expositor, because he makes this Name only a general Denomination; Yet, after all, I am ready to think there is only a gradual Difference among all the three, and that the first is the strictest and most stanch, this second more easy and lax, and the third a Degree lower than any of them. Now, it is evidently less to have the Name than the Mark; for that required them to be stiff to the Interest, even to Life and Conscience; This stipulates no more than the owning the Beast, and engaging to him. I also own, in the first Ages of both *Popery* and *Mahometanism*, there was no Oath of Fealty required of any, but simply to own them, and the Beasts contented themselves to curse these who dissented from them; but, as they got their Government established, they tied People by the Consciences: Yet will not this weaken the Sense given; for the first went all the Length demanded of them; the rest were not so straitly tied up, but had more Room, as is plain amongst the Followers of both Beasts at this Day.

The 3d Term of Communion, *or the Number of his Name.* That the Relative [*his*] agrees to the *Beast*, is beyond all Debate; for we read of the *Name of the Beast*, in the Clause immediately preceeding; and that *Name* is to be taken here in the same Sense, is as plain: So that no more remains here to be enquired after but the *Number*, upon which as the Stress of this third depends as a Term of Communion, so it will make the Solution of that Riddle in the next Verse more easy. Nor can I think of a surer Way to come by the Meaning of this Word, than from Scripture: We read, Chap. xv. 2. the Saints got the Victory *over his Mark, and over the Number of his Name.* This makes it evident, whatever be the Sense of this Number, it created no small Difficulty to the Saints, and cost them Struggle to overcome it; which, to be sure, carries us quite off the literal Way of Understanding it: And besides, it defeats that Notion that there is only an *Arithmetical* Quirk, which to engage would be a trivial Work for the Saints; and to defeat it, would be but an inglorious Victory, and not worth the recording. Besides, it could never be a Term of Communion, as we find it expressly made here. But we proceed to search after the Scripture-acceptations of this Word.

Number is not always taken in the same Sense in Scripture: For, 1. Sometimes it is taken for a Counting in order to bring the Thing numbred to a *Sum*, and so it is an aggregate Number consisting of many smaller Numbers; thus it is taken in this Prophecy, *Rev.* vii. 4. *I heard the Number of them that were sealed, One hundred and forty and four Thousand*, which is the Sum total of Twelve Times Twelve thousand: This cannot be the Sense here; for this Number is not said to consist of broken or lesser Numbers. 2. Sometimes it signifies to repute or judge of, even tho' there be no Sum taken of what is thus counted; as, *Isa.* 53. 12. *He was numbred with the Transgressors.* Tho' we should allow something of this here, I see not how it can constitute the full Meaning: For to say, the Repute or Esteem they put upon the Beast is Six hundred and sixty six, will

will not anſwer the Difficulty in the next Verſe. It is however true, both *Papiſts* and *Mahometans* have a great Regard to their ſeveral Heads; and it is a great Term of Friendſhip amongſt their otherwiſe divided Sects, that all *Papiſts* own the *Pope*, and all *Mahometans* their falſe *Prophet*. 3. It imports to order or diſpoſe of, as, *Job* xxxviii. 37. *Who can number the Clouds in Wiſdom?* It is evident from the Connection, the Senſe is not to tell how many are of them; but to order them ſo, as they ſoften the hardned Earth, that they may diſtil in moderate Quantities, and not fall down like a Cataract from Heaven to deſtroy the Earth. This ſeems alſo to have Room here; and ſo, by the Number of his Name, may be meant the political Order of his Government, marſhal'd as may beſt ſuit for the Preſervation of the ſame. In this Senſe we have it taken, *Pſal.* cxlvii. 4. *He telleth the Number of the Stars, and calleth them all by Name*, i. e. He has wiſely diſpoſed them in ſuch Order, as beſt anſwers his Deſign of forming them; for it is added, *Great is our Lord, and of great Power.* We are ſure, the Policy of both thoſe Beaſts hath been ſuch, as has contributed very much to their Stability. This alſo well ſuits the Scope of the Place, for it is a notable Term of Communion to ſubſcribe to all their Policy; nor indeed dare any among them challenge it, but upon their Peril. 4. It it taken for the Perfection of a Thing, as, *Dan.* v. 26. *God hath numbred thy Kingdom, and hath finiſhed it*: i. e. God, in the Exerciſe of his Providence, hath by Degrees raiſed thy Empire, and brought it to this Pitch of Perfection, beyond which it cannot go. In this ſame Senſe we have it in that ſame Prophecy, *Dan.* 9. 2. *I* Daniel *underſtood by Books the Number of the Years, whereof the Word of the Lord came to the Prophet* Jeremiah, *that he ſhould accompliſh Seventy Years in the Deſolation of* Jeruſalem. The plain Meaning whereof is, *Daniel* by Study found out the preciſe Time, eſtabliſhed by God for the Reduction of *Judah*'s Captivity. The Places in *Jeremiah* ſeem to be theſe, *Jer.* xxv. 12. *Jer.* xxix. 10. There are other Texts in Scripture to the ſame Purpoſe. And this ſome think to be the expreſs Senſe of the Words; but then it will follow, that this Six hundred and ſixty Years are to finiſh the Period of theſe Beaſts Government, elſe they prove nothing; for the above Texts look that Way: Beſides it is an unlucky Quotation from the Fall of *Babylon*; for to be ſure that Kingdom was not in its Prime when *Darius* and *Cyrus* had beſieged it ſo long. And the other Text does not meet. But, after all, how will they make a Term of Communion of it? For, who would be fond to join themſelves to any Society, juſt on the Brink of Perdition?

So that we are reduced to the *ſecond* and *third* Acceptations of the Word; and the rather that theſe, eſpecially the third, is indeed an Article of *Communion*; for none can enjoy any Privilege, who do not go in with their Policy. Nor muſt the ſecond be intirely neglected; yea, it is in a great Meaſure wrapt up in the third. Now, if we have been ſo lucky as to hit the Meaning of *Name*, this Notion of Number will fall in with it very eaſily: For the whole Senſe of both will be this, They were to own and adhere to that Order and Polity was in Being, when the Generality of Mankind were moulded and framed according to the Nature, Temper, and Spirit of the *Beaſt*, i. e. they can neither buy nor ſell therewith. There is one Difficulty more about this: It was ſaid, the Third Term of Communion is the loweſt; Yet it would appear this Number of the Beaſt is the ſtricteſt, as explained. I anſwer, It is certainly the loweſt: For this ſeems to bind them to no more than what the Beaſt owned and profeſt, as ſoon as he came to arrive at the ſeveral Characters of the Beaſt, which were a great deal lower and eaſier than afterwards: Of this we get a further Diſcovery in the next Verſe. Now we haſten to,

II. The Certification; Without theſe three, *no Man might buy or ſell.* This ſeems at firſt View to be a very heavy Certification, for at this Rate all Commerce muſt fly up; for Buying and Selling is a plain Deſcription of Civil Friendſhip and Traffick, without which neighbouring Kingdoms cannot ſubſiſt. We ſee, while War is proclaim'd betwixt two Nations, there is an Interruption of Trade. It is alſo true, that ſeditious Practices by a Faction in the ſame Kingdom, brings down upon the Heads of the Authors, the Vengeance of the Government againſt which they had riſen. This among the *Romans* was called, *interdictio ignis & aquæ*. Among the *Germans* they are ſaid to *be put into the Ban of the Empire*. In *England* it is called *Attainting*. In *Scotland* it was in former Reigns called by the Name of *Intercommuning*, by which they were excluded from all the common Benefits of Life, as Support, Shelter, and could get nothing for any Thing. I own all this to be comprehended here, and indeed it is the greateſt Length I find many Expoſitors go: Yet, with Submiſſion, I think more is intended in this Expreſſion; and that it has a particular Eye to *religious Communion* alſo. That which carrieth me to this Thought, is, I find, Communion with God, in the true Religion, repreſented by the ſame Expreſſion, *Iſa.* lv. 1. *Come ye, buy and eat; yea, come and buy Wine and Milk*, &c. Our Lord alſo in parabolical Expreſſions, which are much a-kin to prophetical, uſeth the ſame Phraſe, *Mat.* xiii. 44. *The Kingdom of Heaven is like*

unto a Treasure hid in a Field; the which when a Man hath found, he hideth, and for Joy thereof, goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that Field. In both which Places, it is unquestionably to be meant of *Fellowship* with *Christ*; and therefore by an Analogy, which seemeth needful here, we are to understand by it Communion with these Beasts in their Delusions: Which will be still more plain, when we consider that afterwards we have the same Figure used to point out the religious Fellowship of the Merchants of the Earth, *Rev.* xviii. 11. *They shall weep and mourn over her, for no Man buyeth her Merchandice any more.* To me it seems strange, that these who take *Buying* and *Selling* literally here, should understand it figuratively in the Quotation, tho' it be most equal we should take it in the same Sense in both Places.

This *Buying* and *Selling* seems to denote the *Dispensers*, and *these* to whom they dispense; and is perfectly agreeable to both Beasts: As, 1. To that of *Rome*, which may be designed a Market of *Spiritual* Things, for a *temporal Price*. *Sunt cuncta venalia Romæ*; They sell their Church-dignities, which is the most gross and absurd Piece of *Simony*; They sell Pardons, Indulgences, &c. which is the Top of *Blasphemy*; And, which is worst of all, they sell Christ, Heaven, and Salvation for the Price of good Works; but there must be the Addition of a round Sum to the *Pope's* Coffers. 2. As to the *Mahometan* Beast, there is also a *Selling*: For as their *Emperors*, whether of *Turky*, *Persia*, &c. make Money of all their religious Preferments of the first Rate; So these once installed have the Power of repeating from the minor Sort, a large Share of what they gave for their own. And they may be said no less truly to sell their imaginary *Paradise*, than the *Papists* do their *Heaven*. But we would consider what is further contain'd in the Comprehension of Buying and Selling, whether in a civil or sacred Sense, in these few Things;

1. There is a publick Proclamation of the Market, else, who can attend it? It is not possible to find any have been at more Pains to publish their Doctrines, than the *Papists* and *Mahometans*; for they, like the *Pharisees*, *have compassed Sea and Land*: And, instead of the *Trumpet of the Gospel*, which our Lord institute, they give the Alarm by the *Trumpet of War*. Both of them design their Seditions, Invasions, &c. the *Holy War*. The Design of propagating their Faith, legitimates every unjust Step they take.

2. In Merchandice there is an exposing the Goods to the best Advantage, which takes Place here as to both Beasts. The *Pope* finds the *Scripture* imperfect, and therefore has provided a Supply of *Traditions*: Because some Things in Scripture bear hard on corrupt Nature, like the kind *Pharisees*, they have made the Word of God a *Lesbian Rule*, which can indifferently be applied to any Thing, by their Comments. If any scruple their own Weakness, or Unworthiness, here's immediate Auxiliaries from the Merits of departed Saints, which the *Pope* pretends he can make as much their own, as if they had been performed by them: Tho', as one observes, many of their Saints never had a Being, and some of them are roaring in Hell for their own Sins, notwithstanding of all their spare Merits. As for the *Mahometans*, they have a no less dexterous Way of commending their Faith, while they tell us, That *Moses*, *John Baptist* and *Jesus* never brought any Thing to Perfection, for that was to be the Work of their *great Prophet*: And therefore his *Alcoran* must take Place of both the Testaments; and these must speak by it, and not it according to them. As to the other Particulars, they are every whit as condescending to our shattered Natures, as ever the well-natur'd Papists were; and in many Things outdo them: For they have framed a Heaven not suited to the hallowed Dispositions of mortified Persons, but exactly calculate to the Meridian of a mere Rake, where all is sensual, and they have no more to do but swim down the Stream.

3. In Merchandice there is a cheapning of the Bargain: For if once Curiosity be excited, immediately the Question is, *For how much?* And in this both are very ready to satisfy a natural Conscience, which commonly is not ill to please: There needs never a Merchant go from their Shop without a Bargain; for if the Poor wants to give what their Avarice requires, there's a Composition, and so many drudgery Pieces of Work will do all the Business; and what would not a Man do for eternal Happiness, who can tamely work all his Life for a very mean Subsistence? But they are so merciful as never check his Corruptions; they may take their Swing, and yet escape Damnation at very easy Rates. As for the Rich again, who had rather *pay* as *do*, there will be a total Immunity from every Thing cross to Flesh and Blood, provided they keep open Pockets, and by these Means Heaven or Paradise shall be secured to them.

4 In Merchandice there are many Arguments used to move the Buyer to go in with the Bargain; As, (1.) It is exactly fit for them, and what they cannot expect any where else. If they go to the Law, besides the Trouble of Moral Performances, there

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is the expenſive Remembrance of Sin from Time to Time. If they go to the Goſpel, they're in Hazard to ſtrip off all, and muſt quit with what they reckon as dear to them as their Soul. *i. e.* their beloved Sin, and Perſonal Righteouſneſs: But, with them, both of theſe Difficulties are obviate. 2. They come to lower Terms than any other will. The Terms of *Moſes* are fixed, and not an Ace to be remitted: If they have Recourſe to the Goſpel, that is the Plague of all; for *Renunciation* and *Reſignation* are the eſſential Characters of a Chriſtian: The Fruits of the Fleſh, yea and the Root on which they grow muſt be pull'd down, and pluck'd up; And they are to give themſelves, after the moſt laborious Manner, to the diligent Obſervation of all Chriſt's Commands, in their Nature very croſs to Fleſh and Blood. But as for theſe Beaſts, they bring their Terms much lower, for they will not ſtick to ſlump in Bulk what others would ſet off by Parcels: A few Things will make a *Papiſt*, and fewer a *Mahometan*. One might ſay, If their Way to Heaven were as ſure as it is eaſy, our Lord would have but few Diſciples: Yet he has told us, *Wide is the Gate and broad is the Way that leadeth to Deſtruction*; And ſuch is the Way of both the *Pope* and *Mahomet*: *But narrow is the Way and ſtrait is the Gate that leadeth unto Life*; And this is the only Way of Salvation through Chriſt. Now, when both theſe are laid together, it will give a very full View of theſe Words; and aſſures us, none who go not in with theſe Terms of Communion propoſed, can have either civil or religious Peace.

18 Here is Wiſdom. Let him that hath Underſtanding count the Number of the Beaſt; for it is the Number of a Man: And his Number is Six hundred threeſcore and ſix.

Here we have the Concluſion of this Part of the Viſion, in a Riddle which hath puzzled the Learned in all Ages, among whom we find as many different Opinions as there are Expoſitors, unleſs ſome have intirely fallen in with the Thoughts of others. We muſt be at ſome Pains to examine at leaſt ſome of theſe jarring Senſes; but, in order to that, we would conſider theſe Parts in the Text, 1. A Preface. 2. An Exhortation. 3. A Method or Meith laid down for finding out the Senſe of the Riddle.

I. The Preface to this Riddle, *Here is Wiſdom*: We have the Equivalent, Chap. xvii. 3. *Here is the Mind that hath Wiſdom.* Some tell us, This *Wiſdom* is by *Revelation*, and that none without it can attain to the Solution of this great Point: But this croſſeth the Exhortation that follows; For, how can the moſt judicious, by his Endeavours, be able to inveſtigate the ſame, ſeeing all Revelation comes by the *Will of God*? Others again tell us, It is to be enucleat by the moſt penetrating in *Philoſophy* or *Mathematicks*: But it is not probable this ſhould be the Meaning either; For we know that unſanctified Wits have done more Harm than ever they did Good to Religion, by their Reſearches: For, commonly they explain all the Notions of God, and the Manifeſtations of his Will, according to theſe natural Principles they had ſuck'd in; and ſo we find the *Ariſtotelian*, *Platonick*, *Pithagorean*, yea and of late the *Carteſian* Philoſophy have had in their Turns a very malevolent Aſpect upon the Principles of our Faith, each drawing them to their own Party; Tho' one may be bold to ſay, The *Spirit of God*, in the Manifeſtation of the Way of Salvation, never reſtricted himſelf to any Sect. And it is plain, the new have pick'd ſo many Quarrels with the old Philoſophers, as gives too much Ground to believe none of them will prove credible Expoſitors of the *Oracles of God*. Others tell us, We are to mean the *Wiſdom* of the *Regenerate*, and that it is only to be expected the divinely illuminate can unriddle the intricate Queſtion. But there are no fewer Difficulties incumber this than the reſt: For as we have no Promiſe, that the moſt Religious and ſeriouſly *Godly* ſhall be bleſt with this Faculty of opening up the dark and myſterious Parts of the Scripture, eſpecially when they are not of abſolute Neceſſity to Salvation; ſo it is found by Experience, that many ſerious and undoubtedly *godly Perſons*, when not enriched with Education, imploy'd in an intenſe Meditation, eſpecially if their natural Powers be weak, have blundered very much in ſome Paſſages of Scripture, the clearing of which might have been of ſingular Uſe to the Church: Yet, to be ſure, this with other Accompliſhments bids faireſt for reſolving this obſtruſe Text. And therefore I am ready to think, the Wiſdom here meant, is of a truly inlightned Man, who is deſigned to follow the Candle of Revelation, and that does not depend for his firſt Notions of Truth upon any Thing but the *Word of God*, and who duly and ſeriouſly pauſes and conſiders what hath been revealed of theſe *Beaſts*, both as to their former and ſucceeding State, and ſo, by *comparing ſpiritual Things with ſpiritual*, comes to ſuch Concluſions as may give Light in the Matter: Yet, all this While, there is no Promiſe of *Infallibility*; for God has wiſely ordered this, that

Men might not be puffed up, but taught with Dependence to ſearch, and with Modeſty to advance their Thoughts. In this Expreſſion I take theſe Things to be included;

1. The Difficulty of the Thing: For, were it eaſy, there had been no Need of this ſolemn Preface. Nor is it ſafe to think that this *Wiſdom* is the Wiſdom of Men allenarly; How can we think God will light his Lamp at the Spunk of natural Knowledge? But *we are ſure that the Mouth of the Juſt brings forth Wiſdom*, Prov. x. 31. So that we need not go to the Schools of the wiſe Men of this World, to find out the *Myſteries of God*, which cannot be had any Way but from himſelf. The Obſcurity of this Paſſage is more than evident from the many and jarring Notions of the beſt on this Subject.

2. The Poſſibility of attaining the ſame: Were there here ſuch an Inhibition as we had about the Voice of the Thunders, *Chap.* x. 4. *Write them not*, we were bound, in Obedience to the Divine Command, to ſuperſede all further Enquiry, and leave the Matter as we found it. It is not to be accounted for, that ſome who ventured to tell what the Thunders uttered, have paſt over this Paſſage in profound Silence; tho' *John* was commanded to conceal the firſt, and has given us a Way to find out this.

3. The Importance of the Matter. Surely the Spirit of God would not call a Man of Wiſdom to imploy his Search about a Trifle; ſo that it muſt contain ſomething of Weight and Influence when found out, that may be for Comfort to the Saints, and Edification to the Church: God never bade his Servants peel Straws. The Church had better continue in the eaſy Ignorance of ſuch Things, the Knowledge whereof is attain'd with much Difficulty and Labour, but of no Moment when found out.

4. That Diligence be given in the Search. The Ignorant and Slothful need not to expect to overcome it, but only ſuch as give Pains in the Uſe of proper Means.

II. The Exhortation, *Let him that hath Underſtanding count the Number of the Beaſt.* This skreens from the Crime of *Curioſity*, while there is ſo plain a Direction; and ſo, if we enquire modeſtly and humbly, there is no Sin, tho' we ſhould be ſo unlucky as miſs the true Senſe of the Thing. In this Exhortation I conſider theſe Things:

1. That about which we are to ſearch, *The Number of the Beaſt.* By the *Beaſt* I ſhew'd we are to underſtand both the *Papal* and *Mahometan* Powers; and by *Number* we are to mean the Regard claimed, and the Perfection or Conſummation of their Polity in all its Parts.

2. What is to be done anent the ſame, We are *to count.* The Word ſignifies properly *to count by Stones*, for that was the Cuſtom of theſe Eaſtern Countries in thoſe Times; as we had in uſe among us afterwards, to number by ſmall Pieces of Braſs, called *Counters*: This was both the eaſieſt and ſureſt Way of counting; to which one may boldly affirm, *Algebra* and the Square Roots were great Strangers. We have this Word elſewhere, *Luke* xiv. 28. *Which of you intending to build a Tower, ſitteth not down firſt and counteth the Coſt?* It requires an accurate Enquiry betwixt the Stock and the Deſign; ſo here there ſeems needful a Collation of all Things, eſpecially before, that we may form a probable Judgment of the Queſtion under Debate.

3. To whom this Exerciſe is recommended, *Him that hath Underſtanding*: Some render it, Him that hath a Mind. If we take *Mind* for the Soul, as frequently we muſt, then the Direction is to every reaſonable Man; but if we bring it as low as our common Acceptation of the Word carries, then it is to be meant of the *Inclination*; and ſo there is no more in it, than a Recommendation to any that pleaſeth. But the common Acceptation of the Word is *Knowledge* and *Conſideration*; ſo it is ſaid, *Phil.* iv. 7. *The Peace of God paſſeth all Underſtanding.* It ſeems to have in it here, 1. That he be one of *good Acquaintance in the Scripture*; for that is the Balance of the Sanctuary, in which all Matters are to be weighed. 2. He would be a Man of *Prudence* and *Diſcretion*, to apply Matters, and, without Prejudice or Prepoſſeſſion, to lay one Thing to another.

III. There is a Method propoſed to anſwer this Difficulty, which alſo carries in it the State of the *Riddle.* No doubt it has its Anſwer, as well as its Difficulty, in its Boſom; but yet it is no eaſy Matter to find it out. I ſhall, 1. Touch at the general Account, which muſt path the Way. 2. I ſhall conſider a little the Thing, and not be ſtiff to any Aſſertion about it.

1. In the general it is ſaid, The Number of the Beaſt *is the Number of a Man.* It will do no Service here to tell us that this Beaſt is the Emblem of a Man, or a Succeſſion of Men; for that is owned on all Hands, that theſe Beaſts do repreſent Sovereign Powers. If we take *Number* in the eſtabliſhed Senſe before, for the Polity of theſe Governments pointed at by theſe Beaſts, and the Reſpect paid them, yet we are at a Loſs how to make theſe the Number of a Man. It is more trival that is advanced by a learned Man,

Man, That while *John* calls this *the Number of a Man*, he means *himſelf*; for there is not ſo much as one Word of him in all this Context: Nor will it be Senſe while it is applied to him, becauſe the Aſſertion is, *The Number of the Beaſt is the Number of a Man.* A great many take with this Notion, That the Senſe of it is to be fetched from the Numbring or numerical Letters in ſome particular Name, as in the Word λατεινος while the numbring Letters are added, they make up *666*. Others, becauſe that is not the Name of a Man, have laboriouſly ſearched for the the Names of Men, and ſeverals are condeſcended on, ſome of them Popes, and ſome of them other Men. All theſe are weak and bootleſs Conjectures; for, be this Number what it will, it muſt be a known Thing, elſe it cannot be a Term of Communion: But it is not poſſible to find this in any of theſe, and therefore we may juſtly reject the ſame. We before proved, that *Number* ſignifies the Conſtitution of any Thing; I ſhall add one Text more, *Ezek.* xliii. 10. *Let them meaſure the Pattern*, Orig. *Number*. All underſtand this of the Form of the Temple in the preceeding Chapters; ſo that, while it is called the Number or Conſtitution of a Man, it not only denotes that all it has is humane, and not of God's Appointment, but that its Dimenſions, eſpecially as to Duration or Appearance, are like a Man: And then one of two ſeems to ſtand fair for the Senſe, either to determine the Time when this Man of Sin ſhould come to his Height, from the Date of theſe Viſions, and ſo to advertiſe the Church then that he was a good Way off; Or the Time he was to continue in this Pinnacle of Dignity, that he was not to laſt over long, but was limited to as few Years as many have lived, for many lived above *666* Years. Nor do I ſee any Reaſon why a Part of both may not be comprehended therein; I am ſure it makes the Queſtion of the more Moment, and thereby at once the Church is advertiſed when theſe Beaſts would appear, *viz.* *666* Years after the Viſion; and then how long they ſhould continue in that State, *viz.* other *666* Years after they were form'd and conſtitute, at which Time they were to fade apace. Tho' I will not affirm this to be the preciſe Meaning of the Words, yet I hope to prove it goes nearer the Fact than any Thing I have ſeen; and to be ſure the Moment of the Riddle is greater than any of the reſt make it: Nor is it uncouth in Scripture to count ſeveral Periods by the ſame Number, as the three moſt notable Periods of the Old Teſtament Church are counted *by fourteen Generations*, Matth. i. 17. It is true, it is not ſo plain here as in that Place, but we will hear more of this after we have conſidered,

2. The other Step of this Method, more particularly advanced, *His Number is Six hundred threeſcore and ſix*. Some make this altogether Arithmetical, and yet are driven from the moſt common Rules thereof, and take Sanctuary in the *Square Roots*; which however they make not tight, but are obliged to throw off a great many Fractions, and evidently, while they apply the whole, they croſs the Scope of the Context, which makes this Number one of the Terms of Communion: And even the 25, which they make to be the *Square Root*, does not make us on whit wiſer, which yet the Text ſays. And as to the Multitude of *Twenty fives* they make in *Rome*, they are contradicted by the beſt Hiſtorians: But, were all true, they could not be the Number of a Man, which is a Clauſe of the Text theſe Gentlemen neglect.

Others again make this *666* point at ſo many Errors in the Church of *Rome*, which are Articles of Communion. So *Willets*, in his *Synopſis*, has been at great Pains this Way, but has not made up the Number; and many that he mentions are not received by all Papiſts; for ſome of them are rejected by one Sett of Regulars, and others by others of them. There are a great many other Thoughts about this Number, which ſhew more the Curioſity of their Authors, than the Senſe of the Text; and therefore I paſs them, and ſhall a little further illuſtrate what I touched lightly at before.

As to the Riſe of this Beaſt, it is plain it fell in with the End of the ſeventh Century, which is the preciſe Time, if the *666* be added to the Time condeſcended on, for theſe Viſions as above accounted for: Nor will it baffle this Opinion, what ſome tell, That this is not the Number of Years, but the Number of a Name: For they cannot give one probable Conjecture for making this out of the numerical Letters; and when both *Name* and *Number* are conſidered in a ſcriptural and prophetical Senſe, *Years* are neceſſarily and naturally couched up in them. This ſhould be the more noticed, that it keeps Pace with the preceeding Periods of this Prophecy, and makes one Part thereof clear, and gives Light to another: This alſo conſtitutes a neceſſary Term of Communion; for none could have any Benefit under the Beaſt, who did not go in with their Conſtitution. The Thunder-bolts of Curſes were let fly againſt Recuſants by the *Papiſts*, and the Sword by the *Mahometans*; ſo that none could have any either civil or religious Benefit by them, who went not in to their Meaſures. Again, this is the eaſieſt and loweſt Term of Communion; for, even when both theſe Beaſts were conſtitute, they had not all that Fardle of Wickedneſs and Error they afterwards grew up to: For, as we

heard above, the Papiſts had not adopted their Idol of the *Maſs*, nor did they dream of *Purgatory*; their *abſolute Pardons* of the greateſt Wickedneſs, and *diſpenſing* with the moſt neceſſary Commandments of God, did not obtain at the Beginning. The *Mahometans* alſo were more mild towards the Chriſtians ſo long as they were afraid of their Power, and gave ſpecial Orders for their Safety and Protection; but this and other Things laſted no longer than they found themſelves able to do with them as they pleaſed.

We would next a little enquire into the flouriſhing Condition of theſe Beaſts, which, according to the given Senſe of theſe Words, was to continue in their Greatneſs the Space of 666 Years. Nor will that common Objection hold, That at that Time *Antichriſt* muſt have fallen, and ſo be no more: For 'tis plain from all the Parts of this Prophecy, he was not to fall at once, but by Degrees; as the Apoſtle *Paul* ſays, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 8. *Him will God conſume with the Spirit of his Mouth*; which is not a ſudden, but a ſlow Deſtruction. Beſides, from this Prophecy we find *Seven Trumpets* and *Seven Vials* are imployed to bring down by Degrees that *Man of Sin*. That we may have ſome Light in this, it will be neceſſary we call in the Help of Hiſtory; and from the Words of the Text, in Conjunction with the Matters of Fact, deduce the Concluſion: And, for that End, I ſhall treat of theſe two Beaſts diſtinctly.

As to the firſt Beaſt, whereof we read *v.* 1. he is, we find, to continue the Space of 1260 Years, of which Number he is, according to this Suppoſition, to bruik his Excellency 666 Years. As to the Date of theſe, I find only two can be laid Hold on with any Probability; 1. From the Time of his getting the *Dragon's* Seat, *v.* 2. for not till then could he deſerve the Character of the Beaſt. Now, if we allow this to be under the Pontificat of *Bennet* II. about the Year 684, and by adding thereto 666, the Amount will be 1350, which will fall in with the End of the Pontificat of Pope *Clement* VI. who died in the Year 1352: He was matchleſs in Covetouſneſs, and a mortal Enemy to Emperor *Lewis* of *Bavaria*, who had warm Thoughts towards a Reformation. The Pope condemned him as an Heretick: He appointed the Jubilee to be every Fiftieth Year: The *Roman Breviary* was compoſed in his Time. Never *Pope* was greater, in either Power or Wickedneſs. In his Time, one *William Occam* an *Engliſhman*, of the Order of the *Minorites*, wrote a Book againſt the *Pope*, and aſſerted him to be *Antichriſt*. The ſame was done by *Leopold* Biſhop of *Bamberg*; and ſeveral other Profeſſors of both Divinity and Law gave their Suffrage to this Aſſertion. After this his Succeſſor burnt to Death *Johannes de Rupe ſciſſa*, for his Commentary on the *Revelation*, becauſe he applied all ſpoken of *Antichriſt*, to the *Pope*. This ſeems to be a memorable Paſſage of the Papal State, eſpecially if we conſider that about this Time a terrible *Schiſm* in the Church of *Rome*, which had one *Pope* at *Rome* in *Italy*, and another at *Avignion* in *France*, who excommunicate each other, with their Adherents, for the Space of 70 Years. It is noticed by all, the *Papal Kingdom* was never ſo great afterwards. 2. We may ſtate another Period for the Commencement of this Number, from the Healing of the deadly Wound of this Beaſt, *v.* 3. in the Year of the Empreſs *Irene*, about the Year 790; and this will meet with the Year 1456. Or, if we carry it further down to the Reign of *Lewis* the *Pius* 814. which lands it at the Year 1480; at both which we will find notable Strokes given this Beaſt. 'Tis owned by all, that from this Time the Papal Power did ſenſibly decline in many Parts of *Europe*, and was never able to make its Ground good. If we have hit the general Notion of *Name* and *Number*, this Application cannot be impertinent; tho' I ſhall not venture to aſſert this to be the *preciſe Senſe* of the Text, yet, as I hinted before, this makes the Riddle of more Moment, than any other Opinion.

As to the ſecond Beaſt, of which *v.* 11. This ſeems alſo to determine the proſperous State thereof: Tho' *Mahometaniſm* did not ſo early appear in the World as *Popery* did, yet it made, by a great deal, faſter Advances. We ſhall not dwell on our Enquiries when this Power arrived to its Height; for it is generally owned it was as great and extenſive about the Beginning of the eighth *Century*, as ever it was afterwards; and that towards the End of the fifteenth *Century*, it met with ſome Checks could never be overcome: And now, 'tis plain to every One, it has been upon the Declenſion for ſome Hundreds of Years, and in all its Parts is much weaker than it was; for both their Numbers and Courage are failed: So that, as theſe Beaſts have had a notable Harmony betwixt them, as in their Riſe and Nature, ſo alſo will they in their Fall.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

WE had the Illuſtration of four Seals in the two preceeding Chapters; and, it ſeems plain, this Chapter preſents us with the Explication of the ſixth Seal, from the Collation of this with Chapter ſeventh. It may indeed be enquired, What is become of the fifth Seal? for we cannot find one Jot further concerning it. I anſwer, The Caſe is evident from what was ſaid on the fifth Seal, *Chap.* vi. 9. *&c.* That the whole Viſion was in Heaven, and no Part of it concerned the Earth, or the Church militant, further than it is a comfortable Prophecy of the Redreſs of the Church's Grievances, which did begin under the ſixth Seal, *Chap.* vi. 11. and further illuſtrate in this Chapter in a very full and pointed Manner, tho' ſtill in a prophetical Strain.

This Chapter contains an Emblem of the riſing State of the Church, the Progreſs of her Advancement, with the Beginning of her Enemies Sorrows; which we have wrapt up in ſeveral Viſions, ſometimes of appearing Angels, and other Figures, and ſometimes Voices without any noted Emblem; all which we take up in this Order, 1. The Emblem of the Riſing Church, *v.* 1. and a Voice conſequential to this Viſion, and the Explication thereof, to *v.* 6. 2. An Emblem of the Propagation of the Church, to *v.* 8. 3. A Prophecy of the Downfal of the Church's Adverſaries, *v.* 9. 4. A terrible Certification againſt all in Communion with the Beaſt, to *v.* 13. 5. A notable Encouragement to the Church under her Calamities, to *v.* 15. 6. Some Emblems of God's Judgments upon his Enemies, to the End.

1 AND I looked, and lo, a Lamb ſtood on the Mount Sion, and with him an Hundred forty and four thouſand, having his Father's Name written in their Foreheads.

The Prophet having ſeen the Greatneſs and Cruelty of Antichriſt, looks earneſtly about him, to ſee what ſhould follow; and then, according to his Wiſh, he diſcovers this comfortable Emblem, upon the Back of all theſe ſadning Viſions. And here ſhortly view, 1. What he ſaw. 2. Where he diſcover'd this Sight.

1. What he ſaw, in theſe Steps, *1ſt, A Lamb*: No doubt, the ſame we had before, *Chap.* v. 6. for he here is called the *Son of God*; for his Father can be none elſe but he whoſe Mark was put upon the many Thouſands, *Chap.* vii. ſo that it was the Lamb of God. *2dly*, The Lamb's Retinue or Company, *An Hundred forty and four thouſand, with his* [i. e. the Lamb's] *Father's Name written in their Foreheads.* Here we ſee the Nature of the Seal (mentioned above) and it ſeems to be the Characteriſtick betwixt the Followers of the *Lamb* and of the *Beaſt*: One could not think there ſhould ſo many remain, after all the Artifices of the Beaſt to deſtroy, as this Number of *Jews*, and a much greater Number of *Gentiles*, which he did not ſee, but heard; juſt as, *Chap.* vii. 4. he did not ſee, but heard this Hundred forty and four thouſand: And yet, *v.* 9. he ſaw the great Multitude, but in the following Verſe he only heard; ſo that he both heard and ſaw them both, but not at the ſame Time; teaching us to notice carefully what is once revealed. *2dly*, Their Poſture, *ſtanding*; which we explained with Reference to the Lamb, *Chap.* v. 6. and with Reſpect to the Saints, *Chap.* vii. 9.

2. Where he ſaw them, *On the Mount* Sion. This properly was a Part of that Mountain whereon the *Temple of God* of old was built. It ſignifies in prophetical Language the *Church of God*, Pſal. ii. 6. Heb. xii. 22. It is called a *Mount*, becauſe of its Height and Excellency; and, it may be (as in the Opinion of many) to ſhew us it had outſtood many Storms of the Adverſary, and yet were they never able to pull down the ſame. In my Opinion, they but darken Wiſdom with Words, who would fix any other Senſe to theſe Words, than what we advanced and vindicated, *Chap.* vii. and therefor I ſhall add no more about it.

2 And I heard a Voice from Heaven, as the Voice of many Waters, and as the Voice of a great Thunder: And I heard the Voice of Harpers, harping with their Harps.

3 And they ſung as it were a new Song before his Throne, and before the four Beaſts, and the Elders; and no Man could learn that Song, but

the Hundred and forty and four thouſand, which were redeemed from the Earth.

4 Theſe are they which were not defiled with Women, for they are Virgins: Theſe are they which follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth. Theſe were redeemed from among Men, being the Firſt-fruits unto God, and to the Lamb.

5 And in their Mouths was found no Guile: For they were without Fault before the Throne of God.

In the 2d and 3d *v.* we have the conſequential Voice, which may juſtly be reckoned a Part of the Emblem, tho' there was no Figure to the Eye. Here we have to view, 1. Whence this Voice came. 2. The Nature of the Voice. We need be at little Pains about the Origine of this Voice, it is ſaid to *come from Heaven.* Here we are to mind the Apoſtle was all this While on the Sea-ſhore, and the Voice was above him. Becauſe there are mentioned ſeveral Heavens in Scripture, and this does not tell which of them; I think, we may not venture to determine further, than that it was from above, except in ſo far as the following Expreſſions may help us out with it: And ſo it was before the Throne where the *four Beaſts* were, and where alſo the *four and twenty Elders* were; of all which we ſpoke at Length on *Chap.* iv. Nor need we curiouſly to enquire how the Prophet knew this, ſeeing it is ſaid, He only heard, and not ſo much as hinted that he ſaw either the *Throne, living Creatures or Elders*: For the contrary is not ſaid; yea, he might know without ſeeing, by Revelation. But what remains is more material; the Nature of this Voice repreſented to us under ſeveral Expreſſions, ſome of them Metaphorical, and others more direct: We ſhall take them in their Order,

1. 'Tis compared to the *Sound of many Waters*; of this we ſpoke, *Chap.* i. 15. The ſame Phraſe is in both Places, tho' in our Tranſlation it vary. It ſeems a Matter indifferent, whether this be taken as a Similitude, according to the Senſe of the comparative Particle *As*; or in a direct prophetick Stile, and ſo it is the *Sound of many Waters*, which we have explained, *Chap.* xvii. 15. and meets with what we had, *Chap.* vii. 9. *A great Multitude which no Man could number of all Nations.* And I take this to be the Illuſtration of that; this and the following ſays, the Voice was very loud.

2. This Voice is ſaid to be like the Voice *of a great Thunder.* We had this before, *Chap.* vi. 1. It is added here, it was like *great Thunder*, to ſhew us the Voice was louder and more rouzing; ſo that there was much Awe that went along with it, and ſhew'd the Courage of the Speakers.

3. It was melodious, and therefore called *the Voice of Harpers harping with their Harps.* The Word *As* is not added as in the former two, nor is it material whether it be underſtood or not; we know the Harp is a tunable Inſtrument, and in that Age of the World was one of the fineſt and niceſt Sorts of Muſick: So the Church is very melodious, as Chriſt, who is the beſt Judge, declares, *Song* ii. 14. *Sweet is thy Voice.* This is owned by all to be the Voice of Joy and Thankſgiving.

4. It was an extraordinary Song, and therefore, *v.* 3. it is ſaid, *They ſung as it were a a new Song.* Before, the Saints *hang'd their Harps upon the Willows*, while they were ſo hamper'd in ſpiritual *Babylon*; but now, theſe Reſtraints being removed, they change their Notes. We had Occaſion to enquire into the Meaning of this new Song on *Chap.* v. 9.

5. It was a publick Song, becauſe *before the Throne, and before the four Beaſts and the Elders*, i. e. before God, in Sincerity and Simplicity; and before the World, at leaſt the converted Part thereof, with Boldneſs and Affection. The Terms of this were explain'd above, *Chap.* iv.

6. It was proper and peculiar to themſelves, *No Man could learn that Song, but the Hundred forty and four thouſand, which were redeemed from the Earth.* This does not exclude, but include the Multitude of all Nations; nay, it would appear theſe Hundred forty and four thouſand *Jews* learned this Song from the *Gentiles* after their Converſion, as we endeavoured to prove, *Chap.* xi. 15. & 19. compared; for the *Gentiles* will be firſt converted, and after them the *Jews.* As for the reſt of the World, either their Songs were of their Idols, as among the Heathen; or of *Saints* and *Images* among the *Papiſts*; or of the *falſe Prophet* among the *Mahometans*: So that this is the peculiar Privilege of the Children of *God in Chriſt*, all the reſt being incapable of this Exerciſe. It is added, *They were redeemed from the Earth.* We heard of Redemption, *Chap.* v. 9. and of the Meaning of Earth, *Chap.* xiii. 8. whereby they own

own God as the Author of their Converſion, and that the *Jews* are as much by Nature eſtranged from God, as the *Gentiles*.

Laſtly, We have the Characters of the Perſons employed in this Song, *v.* 4, 5. which we ſhall view in that Order we find them:

1. From their *Purity*, v. 4. *Theſe are they which were not defiled with Women.* The Papiſts ſnatch greedily at this, to ſupport their Doctrine of *Celebacy*: Yet none of this Purity belongs to them; for, 1. It is known and confeſt by their own Writers, that many of them are unclean like Goats; and ſome of the graveſt have owned, that this Principle has been a great Snare to many of their Church-men. 2. It is nowhere ſaid in Scripture, there is *Uncleanneſs* in *Wedlock*, while the Parties are faithful to one another: Yea, on the contrary, the Apoſtle tells, *Heb.* xiii. 4. *Marriage is honourable in all, and the Bed undefiled.* I ſhall be very ready to yield, ſuch will not be guilty of unlawful Concubinage; for nothing is more croſs the Nature of Chriſtianity, than fleſhly Filthineſs. But the Throng of Expoſitors underſtand this of ſpiritual Purity, not excluding the other, becauſe *Idolatry* comes under the Deſignations of *Adultery*, and *Fornication*; And then the Meaning is, they had renounced all their idolatrous Practices, and worſhipped only the living and true God: Which ſeems to take Place, if we conſider the Reaſon added, *For they are Virgins*; a Deſignation often beſtowed upon the *Lord's People*, eſpecially in a prophetick Stile, *Iſa.* xxxi. 4, 21. *I will build thee, and thou ſhalt be built, O Virgin of* Iſrael; and, *Turn again, O Virgin of* Iſrael. In the New Teſtament we have the ſame Character, 2 *Cor.* xi. 2. *I have eſpouſed you to one Husband, that I may preſent you as a chaſt Virgin to Chriſt.* This ſeems the rather to take Place here, that *Antichriſt* is compared to, and deſigned by the Name of an Harlot, and is ſaid *to make the Kings of the Earth drunk with the Wine of her Fornication.*

2. From their *Exerciſe*, *Theſe are they which follow the Lamb wherever he goeth*, i. e. They adhere to Chriſt with ſincere and chaſt Love. This is the Diſtinction betwixt Chriſtians and others, of whom we heard, that they wondered after the Beaſt; whereas theſe follow Chriſt fully and conſtantly, neither Life nor Death can ſeparate them from him; but wherever he ſets up his Standard, there are they; for, *John* x. 4, 5. *They know his Voice, and follow him, but the Voice of a Stranger they will not hear.* 2 Cor. vi. 8. *They follow him through Honour and Diſhonour, through evil Report and good Report.*

3. From their *State*, *Theſe were redeemed from among Men, being the Firſt-fruits unto God, and to the Lamb.* We have a Turn of Expreſſion from what we had, *v.* 3. where it is ſaid, they were *redeemed from the Earth*: But in this Verſe, *from Men*; for it is the ſame Conſtruction: And, unleſs we allow our Tranſlation to ſtand *from among*, v. 3. I ſee not how it can take Place here. Some think another Word to be underſtood in this Place, *Traditions*: This might alſo do in the firſt; but I ſee no need for it in either. In whatever Senſe we take it, to be ſure we are to mean they were ſeparate to God, from the common Maſs of Mankind, and from all Sects of Men, High and Low, Rich and Poor, Great and Small; as we had them diſtribute before. It is added, *They were the Firſt-fruits unto God, and to the Lamb.* This is an Alluſion to a legal or ceremonial Cuſtom amongſt the *Iſraelites*, who offered the Firſt-fruits of all their Increaſe unto God; and is oſter than once touched at in the New Teſtament, *Jam.* 1.18. *Of his own good Will begat he us, that we ſhould be a Kind of Firſt-fruits unto him.* It has in it theſe Things, 1. That they were pickt and choſen out of the reſt of the Flock. 2. That they were the firſt ripe, and a Pledge of the reſt; as it is owned by all, the Firſt-fruits were an Earneſt of a plentiful Harveſt: And ſo this muſt be a Prelude to the univerſal Converſion of both *Jew* and *Gentile*, to fall out afterwards. 3. They were intirely dedicate to God's Uſe and Service, yea, that ſomething more was to be done with them, than with the whole Flock; as is evident in the Thing alluded to, and in the Alluſion itſelf; which alſo holds here, for theſe Firſt-fruits had more Difficulties to encounter, than will fall to the Share of the Bulk.

4. From their *Integrity*, *v.* 5. *In their Mouth was found no Guile.* Some twiſt this to Juſtification, from the Turn of the Expreſſion, becauſe it is not ſaid, *There was no Guile*, but that *Guile was not found*: But this is to go too near the *Phraſeology*, which will not be found convenient to do at all Times, to reaſon, becauſe Guile was not found, therefore it was there, but not noticed. I ſhall give one parallel Phraſe to this Purpoſe, concerning our Lord, 1 *Pet.* ii. 22. *Who did not ſin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth.* I own this may be one of the beſt Evidences of Juſtification, but it plainly points at Sanctification. If it be objected, Then this is to make them ſinleſs: I anſwer, it will not prove that, but only that they were free of Treachery; nevertheleſs there might be Infirmities, which are not incompatible with the higheſt Meaſures of Grace in Time: Nor will this bear ſuch an Inference any more than that of this ſame

Apoſtle, 1 *John* iii. 9. *Whoſoever is born of God doth not commit Sin, for his Seed remaineth in him, and he cannot ſin; becauſe he is born of God.* Yet no Body offers from thence to conclude Believers impeccable. But this Senſe is further plain from the annexed Reaſon, *For they are without Fault before the Throne of God.* I own ſome turn this to a *Throne of Juſtice*, and thereby think they have eſtabliſhed the former Opinion; yet they ſhould remember there is a *Throne of Majeſty*, as well as *Juſtice*; which this may be meant of. The beſt Way to find out the Meaning of this *Throne*, in my Thought, is from *Chap.* iv. 2. where we read of a Throne, which all own is not a Throne of Judgment, but of Majeſty; for it cannot be ſaid, that the Elders, and living Creatures, were before, or round about the Throne, to receive Sentence of Abſolution; but they were there to make up the Retinue: And therefore this Expreſſion ſeems to import no more but what we have ſaid of *Zacharias* and his *Wife*, Luke i. 6. *They were both righteous before God*, i. e. they were irreprovable, not according to the Strictneſs of the Law, but agreeable to the Rule of the Goſpel, which requires Sincerity, Diligence, Progreſs, Perſeverance, together with Humiliation, and Repentance for the Remains of Sin and daily Failings; and ſo it anſwers that, *Tit.* ii. 14. *Chriſt purified to himſelf a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.*

6 And I ſaw another Angel fly in the Midſt of Heaven, having the everlaſting Goſpel, to preach unto them that dwell on the Earth, and to every Nation, and Kindred, and Tongue, and People,

7 Saying with a loud Voice, Fear God, and give Glory to him; for the Hour of his Judgment is come: And worſhip him that made Heaven, and Earth, and the Sea, and the Fountains of Waters.

In this Emblem of the Propagation of the riſing Church, we have to conſider, 1. The Mean, 2. His Poſture. 3. His Work. 4. The Execution thereof, together with the grand Argument uſed in this Embaſſy.

I. The Mean or Inſtrument, *another Angel* repreſented to *John*'s View. Some Copies want the Word ἄλλον, and read ſimply *an Angel*; which indeed would cut off the Difficulty ariſing from the Word *another*, that imports there muſt be an *Angel* before, elſe how can this be another? Yet it ſeems plain, this *Angel* is the *firſt* of three; for, *v.* 9. we read of a *third Angel*, and, *v.* 8. of *another* Angel; and this being before both, muſt be the *firſt* of three. But then it may be enquired, Why this *firſt* is called *another*, which, to be ſure, is a reſpective Term? Some ſay, To diſtinguiſh him from the following Angels: But this is no proper Way of ſpeaking; nor can it be juſtified from Scripture, that ever the *firſt* was called *another*. Others ſay, *Another* is here prefixed, to diſtinguiſh this *Angel* from the *Lamb*, and his Company, *v.* 1. But there we read of no Angel, and this cannot be ſaid to be *another Angel*, unleſs there had been a firſt Angel. It appears indeed to be the ſofteſt Meaning, to make this Diſcretive *another* diſtinguiſh betwixt this Angel, and all theſe who had been before in either planting the Church, or keeping Life in it while in the Wilderneſs; for no Doubt God provides himſelf fit Tools when his Church is to be brought out of Bondage.

As to the Meaning of *Angel*, we had Occaſion to enquire about it, *Chap.* ii. 1. Nor do I ſee any other Senſe can be affixed to it here, eſpecially that it is to be meant of the Diſpenſers of the Goſpel, tho' I own in other Caſes it may be otherwiſe interpreted.

II. The Poſture of this Angel, *Flying in the Midſt of Heaven.* This Word, μεσουρανήμα, is nowhere read in the New Teſtament but in this Book, and there only thrice, *Rev.* viii. 13. *I beheld, and heard an Angel flying through the Midſt of Heaven, ſaying, Wo, wo, wo,* &c. the ſecond Time is in the Text, and the third is afterwards, *Rev.* xix. 17. *Saying to all the Fowls that fly in the Midſt of Heaven*: From which laſt eſpecially, it is plain, the Word ſignifies any Space betwixt the Heaven and Earth. And here it ſeems to denote in how publick a Manner this will be done; and ſo they will not ſculk, as they were obliged to do for ſeveral Centuries backwards. We have another different Expreſſion, but to the ſame Purpoſe, by our bleſſed Lord, *Matth.* x. 27. *Preach ye upon the Houſe-top.* That it is ſaid he ſaw this Angel *flying*, alludes to the *Cherubim*, and the *Seraphim*, theſe winged Meſſengers of the *Will of God*, which many learned Men take alſo for Emblems of *Goſpel-Miniſters.* Here it plainly points out their Expedition, they were not to idle away their Time; yea, their Diſpatch would be ſuch, as ſhould be comparable to no Motion but that of Flying: This is a beautiful Emblem of a Goſpel-Miniſtry.

III. This

III. This Angel's Work, *Having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the Earth*, &c. Where is, 1. The Trust committed to them. 2. Their Exercise. 3. To whom they were sent, more generally, and then specified.

1. His Trust, *The everlasting Gospel.* It is said, *He had it*, he did not make it, it is that good Thing was committed to him; in short, it is the Doctrine of the Way of Salvation by Jesus Christ, *who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.* It is so designed in the Old Testament, *Isa.* lii. 7. *Good Tidings, Peace, good Tidings of Good, Salvation.* That these Expressions are meant of the Gospel, is plain, because they are quoted in the New Testament, *Rom.* x. 15. Here the Gospel has a special Adjunct, *Everlasting*; which, to be sure, is to distinguish it from the Doctrine of the *Beasts*: For tho' they pretend theirs to be Gospel, it is nothing like; but they palm upon the World the Fictions of their own Brains, under any Designation they please: But the Gospel this Angel had, is the true Covenant of Grace in *Jesus Christ*; which I presume is not only called *everlasting*, because it leads to everlasting Happiness, and because it is wrapt up in the *Decree of God from all Eternity*, tho' both these be true, but mainly to oppose it to the Errors of the *Beast* and his *Image*: On that Score is is called *everlasting*, because, 1. Of its Antiquity, it being revealed since the Fall gradually, and perfectly in *Jesus Christ*. So that this answers the Papists Calumny against Protestants, *Where was your Religion before* Luther? For it was in the *Word of God*, reveal'd by him from the Beginning, to the Finishing of the Canon of Scripture. 2. Because of its wonderful Preservation, in Spight of all the Endeavours of Hell and the Beast: For tho' the Pope has been at all imaginable Pains to interpolate the Scriptures, God has graciously preserved them intire; and tho' the Enemies of the Truth have been but too successful upon the Writings of most, if not all of the Ancients, yet it was never in their Power to corrupt the Fountain of all Truth. 3. Because of its Continuance. The *Levitical Service* was but for a Time, for it was only a Shadow; but this is to continue to the End of the World, because of the *Truth* of these *Types*, and *Substance* of these *Shadows*, and will at length be victorious over all Errors whatsomever.

2. This Angel's Exercise about the Gospel, to *preach* the same: The *Gospel* was not to be like a Talent hid in a Napkin; they were to trade with it, for the Honour of the great Giver. The Word rendered to *preach*, is most significant, and imports not only the bare proclaiming these *glad Tidings*, but the declaring them with Affection and Joy; so that this *Angel* was to be impress't with these Truths he delivered to others, and not be like a musical Instrument to please others, without any Sense itself.

3. To whom he was sent, *Unto them that dwell on the Earth, and to every Kindred, and Nation, and Tongue, and People.* We need not seek a new Meaning to these here, different from what we had, *Chap.* xiii. 8. where I shewed it is to be understood of the Unconverted, and even such as did worship the Beast. The only Difficulty here is, Whether *Earth* comprehends the other four Expressions; or if *Nation, Kindred, Tongue, and People*, signify something different from Earth? I cannot say this is *nodus vindice dignus*; for we find, *Chap.* xiii. 7. Mention made first of *Kindreds, Tongues, and Nations*, and, *v.* 8. all is comprized in the Phrase of our Text, *Them that dwell on the Earth.* Now, why that Order may not be inverted here, without any new Signification, I see not; and so the καὶ be exigetick, as it is oft-times found in Scripture: Or, if a Distinction must be made betwixt *Earth* and the other four, why may we not think, that in this growing State of the Church, the Gospel was to be preached to other Tongues, and Nations, besides these in Subjection to the Beasts, which is also true? Or, if we will listen to the *learned* Mr. *Marck*, this particular Enumeration by the *four* in the Text, is to remove all Distinction betwixt Clan or Nation, when they embrace the Gospel, and stifles all these Seeds of Animosity did flow from distinct Names; which is a blessed Fruit and Effect of the Gospel.

IV. The Execution of this Exercise, containing the principal Heads insisted on, *v.* 7. Tho' it be not said that the *Apostle* heard the *Angel*, yet it is necessarily understood; for it is added, the *Angel* spoke with a *loud Voice.* From this Verse it is evident, the Gospel is not wholly Promises, for Precepts make up a Part of it: Or, if we would speak more plainly, every Gospel-Promise has a Gospel-Duty couched up in it; and every Precept contains a Promise: Here we have three Duties, the two first pressed by one Argument, and the third by another.

1. Duty, *Fear God*, which comprehends the Acknowledgment of God in his Sovereignty, a Reverencing his Infinite Majesty, and a hearty Compliance with all his Commands, *Prov.* iii 7. *Fear God, and depart from Evil.* Eccl. xii. 13. *Hear the Conclusion of the whole Matter, fear God*, &c. We have no Reason to doubt but here it is in a special Manner opposed to the sinful Security and carnal Worship of the Followers of the Beast, and to the slavish Fear of these Beasts, these Persons were seized with;

for nothing is a greater Obſtruction to Reformation, than the Fear of Man, which quickly baffles all good Purpoſes.

2d Duty, *Give Glory to him.* We had this Expreſſion before, *Chap.* xi. 13. but there I ſhewed the Ground of that Glory given to God, did flow from Conſternation, which is alſo contained here; but there ſeems to be an Improvement, to a Fear of a higher Nature, as we have juſt now ſeen: And ſo the next Duty that flows therefrom, muſt be more kindly, and comprehend in it a hearty Acknowledgment of the excellent Majeſty, Perfections, Manifeſtations, and Operations of God, particularly in our own Souls; and this to be expreſt by our Lips, and thro' the whole Courſe of our Lives: And further, a denying to the Creature, what God has aſſured us, are Parts of his Divine Prerogative. This at once tumbles down the whole Bulk of the *Papal Religion*, which conſiſts in the robbing God of his Excellencies, and beſtowing them upon Creatures; nor is it any more favourable to *Mahometaniſm.* This we ſee is alſo a very copious Subject, and cloſely levelled againſt the Wickedneſs of *Antichriſt.*

The Reaſon of theſe two Duties, *For the Hour of his Judgment is come.* Some underſtand this of the general Judgment, but that is not poſſible, becauſe not only the Trumpets were to ſound, but the Vials to be poured out, and after that the happy State of the Church, is to be according to his Promiſe; yea, and after all Invaſion of *Gog* and *Magog*, is to be before the laſt Judgment. Others take it for the Judgment of *Antichriſt*, or the City of *Babylon*, of which we read next Verſe: This is more agreeable to the Context, yet I cannot think by this we are to underſtand the final Overthrow of *Babylon*; for it is evident *Babylon* ſubſiſts after this *Angel.* That which I take to be the Senſe of it is, The Time is come, when Chriſt, the Great King and Head of his Church, will diſplay his Power and Government in ſuch a Manner, as has not appeared for many Centuries before: This is the firſt Step of his *Taking to him his great Power*, and makes Uſe of this Angel's Miniſtry for that Effect. It is concordant with that of our Lord, *John* vi. 39. *For Judgment am I come into the Word, that theſe who are blind might ſee, and theſe who ſee may be made blind*: Which alſo exactly agrees with the third Duty, *Worſhip him*; and ſo I reckon theſe Things comprehended in it, 1. That he was now to exert his infinite Power, in bringing into the Knowledge of himſelf many that worſhipped the *Beaſts*, and thereby weaken their Kingdoms. 2. That the Miniſtry of this *Angel* would render altogether inexcuſable, theſe who would not obey theſe Exhortations: So that it will be verified of theſe Beaſts, and their Followers, what our Lord ſaid to the *Jews* concerning his own Miniſtry, *John* xv. 22. *If I had not come and ſpoken to them, they had not had Sin: But now they have no Cloke for their Sin.* 3. That this was to be amongſt the laſt Calls; for as ſoon as theſe Angels had done with their Work, Judgments are to be poured out, as the Sins of *Babylon* ripened. God was then giving them Space to repent, and that Time limited, after which they are to expect no more.

3d Duty, *Worſhip him*, i. e. *God.* By *Worſhip* here we are no doubt to underſtand all the Pieces of internal and external Worſhip God requires; and to be ſure excluſive of any other Mode or Matter of Worſhip, and alſo of all other Objects of Worſhip: And ſo here we have a plain Expoſing and Condemning all the Sorts of Idolatry in the World.

The Reaſon of this Duty is, Becauſe God *made Heaven, and Earth, the Sea, and Fountains of Waters*: Which diſtinguiſheth God from all Creatures, however perfect; and much more from Idols and Images, the Work of Mens Hands; and ſhews our intire Dependence upon him, for Being, Life, Subſiſtence, and all Things. If there be any myſterious or metaphorical Meaning of theſe, I muſt own, I cannot find Ground for it; only this I am ſure of, the Worſhip of God is frequently inforced by this, or equivalent Reaſons, *Acts* xiv. 15. *We preach unto you*, that *ye ſhould turn from theſe Vanities, unto the Living God, which made the Heaven, the Earth, and the Sea, and all Things that are therein.* Alſo, *Pſal.* xxxiii. 6, &c. *Jer.* x. 10, &c.

I am of Opinion, this Emblem applies itſelf to that Period of the Church, when *Luther*, *Calvin*, and the other great Men in *Germany*, *France*, *Britain*, and other Places, did with both Courage and Succeſs reſiſt the Errors of *Rome* in *Europe*, and of *Mahomet* elſewhere. It is the more to be noticed, that the moſt Part of theſe Champions for the Truth had been incorporate with that idolatrous Herd, and by the Power of God brought off, and uſed as Inſtruments in God's Hand to weaken *Antichriſt*'s Kingdom: This will be more plain, if we ſhortly run the Parallel betwixt this Angel in the Text, and theſe Reformers, as we have it in Hiſtory.

1. This Angel is ſaid to be *another*, i. e. diſtinct and diverſe from theſe Setts of the Miniſtry that had been imployed in the Church before: But *Luther* and a great many others were not the Seed of the *Waldenſes*, *Albigenſes*, and *Huſſites*; but were immediately

called forth by God from the Communion of the Beaſt, and therefore juſtly deſerve the Deſignation of *another*: Here a Wedge of *Antichriſt*'s Wood was imployed to ſplit the whole Frame.

2. This Angel had *the everlaſting Goſpel*, which was the only Standard of the Reformers, and the Touch-ſtone whereby they had tried all Things.

3. This Angel is ſaid to *fly through the Midſt of Heaven*, to denote the Swiftneſs of his Motion: Than which nothing can be more pat to the *Reformers*; for in a few Years the Goſpel was ſpread ſucceſsfully through the moſt Part of *Europe*: Whole Kingdoms, as *Britain*, *Denmark*, *Sweden*, &c. were diſmembred from *Rome*; And in many other Kingdoms the Reformation levened a full Half, as in *France*, *Germany*, &c. yea, they went to the utmoſt Ends of the Earth.

4. The Exerciſe of this Angel agrees to the *Reformers*, *viz.* Preaching, in which they were indefatigable; obeying the Command of the Apoſtle, for *they were Inſtant in Seaſon and out of Seaſon*.

5. The Doctrines of this Angel and our Reformers were of a Piece, as will be evident to any that conſider the Doctrines of the *Reformation*.

8 And there followed another Angel, ſaying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great City, becauſe ſhe made all Nations drink of the Wine of the Wrath of her Fornication.

Here we have, 1. The Inſtrument. 2. His Meſſage. 3. The Ground of the Threatning.

I. The Inſtrument, *There followed another Angel.* We ſpoke of *Angel* before: Here this is called *another*, i. e. a ſecond; for the next, *v.* 9. is called the third. The remaining Part is, he is ſaid *to follow*, i. e. come after the firſt; which hath theſe Things in it, 1. That the firſt Angel was gone forth before this, and that there was ſome Interval of Time betwixt them, but we know not how much, becauſe it is not ſaid in the Text. 2. That he had the ſame Motion with the former, *i. e.* he did fly thro' the Midſt of Heaven. 3. That he was much of a Piece with the former, tho' not the ſame, yet a *flying Angel*, and an *Angel* furniſhed with the *everlaſting Goſpel*, and that tread in the Footſteps of the firſt, tho' 'tis plain he had ſome more in his Commiſſion than the former. Which brings to the

II. His Meſſage: Where is, 1. The Manner. 2. The Matter thereof.

1. The Manner, *Saying*. The ſame with the firſt, ſave that it is not added in that, and the third, *With a loud Voice*, which no doubt points at ſome Difference betwixt the Enunciation of this from the other two; and yet in Reaſon we cannot make the Difference greater than is betwixt a *loud Voice* and a *low Voice*; which I think of Neceſſity muſt be allowed, elſe I ſee not how we can account for the Difference of the Expreſſions: And therefore, if the particular Application of this ſecond Angel be not ſo obvious as that of the firſt, we muſt aſcribe it to this, that the ſecond was not to be ſo publick as the firſt, and yet ſo notour as be no Secret.

2. The Matter of this Angel's Meſſage, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great City.* This Expreſſion is borrowed from *Iſaiah*, Chap. xxi. 9. *Here cometh a Chariot of Men, with a Couple of Horſemen; and he anſwered and ſaid*, Babylon *is fallen, is fallen.* Again, *Jer.* li. 8. Babylon *is ſuddenly fallen and deſtroyed.* However, it is certain that the great City of *Babylon*, which was the Head of the *Perſian* Kingdom, and ſtood on the River *Euphrates*, is not to be meant here; for that was in Aſhes many Hundreds of Years before *John* had this Viſion, and it was never to this Day rebuilt, nor any City of its Name. No doubt but theſe Paſſages alluded to, did immediately point at the Deſtruction of literal *Babylon*, and that Empire of which it was Head, to whom the Old Teſtament Church was in Bondage: But I am not afraid to affirm, the whole Intendment of theſe Prophecies is not to be confined thereto, but further extended, to point at the Deſtruction of the Enemies of Chriſt's Goſpel-kingdom; and that the Ruin of *Literal Babylon* was a Type of the Fall of *Myſtical Babylon*, which, *Chap.* xi. 8. is ſpiritually called *Egypt* and *Sodom*, and here *Babylon.* It would appear we are to underſtand the ſame Thing by *Babylon* here, as by the *Beaſt* and his *Image*, v. 9. of this Chapter, and will be more plain from Chap. 17. 5, *&c.* compared with this Context. For the further uptaking of this, I offer theſe few Conſiderations;

(1.) By *Babylon* we are to mean the ſame Thing as by the *Beaſt* and his *Image*, Chap. xiii. for theſe are the great Enemies of *Chriſt's Kingdom*, as the *literal Babylon* was of the *Old Teſtament Church*, and under whoſe Power the Church of Chriſt has been long in Bondage.

(2.) This *Babylon* is called a *City*, becauſe of its Polity and regular Order, which has kept it ſo long ſubſiſting, and has many Privileges to beſtow upon its Deniſons. For the ſame Reaſon, but with many Advantages, the *Church of God* is often called a *City*, as we ſhall hear on *Chap.* xxii.

(3.) It is called a *great* City, becauſe of its Power and Authority in the Earth, which muſt be very great, when the Throng of the Nations were influenced thereby, as in the Cloſe of the *Verſe*.

(4.) It is ſaid, This great City *is fallen*; which is to be underſtood prophetically, that it ſhould fall: And that it is doubled, is to declare the Certainty thereof. We are ſure that literal *Babylon* did not fall long after both *Iſaiah* and *Jeremiah* did foretell the Ruin thereof in the Terms of our Text, ſo that we are to underſtand this the ſame Way. It would appear, either that the *Miniſtry*, repreſented by this *Angel*, are to be endowed with a *Spirit* of *Prophecy*; or elſe, that the Lord will ſo let them in to the Knowledge of this and other Scriptures, as they, with Aſſurance, can foretell the Fall of ſpiritual *Babylon* to be ſure, yea, and to hint at the Time.

(5.) The Miſery of this City is repreſented by a *double Fall*. Some ſay, This is to be underſtood of her Apoſtaſy and Defection from the Truth: Yet this cannot hold, for her Defection was prior to this Fall, yea, the procuring Cauſe thereof; and therefore it is added, *Becauſe ſhe made all Nations drink of the Wine of her Fornication*; and ſo this *Fall* is poſterior to her Apoſtaſy. Of this more on *Chap.* xviii. 2.

III. The Reaſon of this Threatning: Where we have, 1. What ſhe uſed. 2. How ſhe uſed it. 3. To whom it was applied.

1. What ſhe uſed, *The Wine of the Wrath of her Fornication*. This Clauſe is much perplexed by different Readings, as ſome turn it, *The Wine of the Poiſon of her Fornication*: Others, *The Mixture of the Wine*, &c. Others, *The bitter Wine of*, &c. Theſe Tranſlations are much a-kin to other, and all of them bring Reaſons to ſupport their Diſſent from our Tranſlation. But I nowhere find θυμος, *Wrath*, taken in any other Senſe thro' the New Teſtament, tho' I own the Wine of her Fornication to be very poiſonable, and to be a Mixture alſo, yea, and will be Bitterneſs in the End; and therefore we ſhould adhere to our own Tranſlation. But we may notice in this theſe Things;

(1.) The Evil of this Potion, It is *Wine* of *Fornication*, becauſe of its Uncleanneſs in the Sight of God. It is very uſual in Scripture to repreſent *Idolatry* by *Adultery* and *Fornication*; as, *Ezek.* xvi. throughout. We find alſo Old *Babylon* branded for her Idolatry, *Iſa.* xxi. 9 And that this is not to be taken in a proper Senſe here, is evident from *Chap.* xvii. 5. where the Motto of *Babylon* is, *The Myſtery, the Mother of Harlots*. And if we underſtand this of both ſpiritual and fleſhly Filthineſs, they will be equally verified in the Beaſt and his Image: Nor need we ſcruple to ſay, Any that will abandon themſelves to the one, will be eaſily drawn to the other.

(2.) The Strength of this Evil, *Wine*; which ſeems mainly to be uſed here, to point out the intoxicating Nature thereof; and therefore, *Chap.* xvii. 2. *The Earth* is ſaid to be *made drunk with the Wine of her Fornication*. And, becauſe of her Devices this Way, we have *Sorcery* and *Fornication* joined, *Chap.* ix. 21.

(3.) The Danger of this intoxicating Uncleanneſs, repreſented by *Wrath*, which is moſt dangerous; whether it be the Wrath of Man, for then it is ſinful; or the Wrath of God, which is the moſt terrible of all Judgments. Here I incline not to take it for the Wrath of God, for that is the Portion of the Beaſt, and a juſt Return to the *Wine* of her *Wrath*; and ſo it falls naturally to be taken for the *Rage* of *Antichriſt* againſt *Chriſtianity*, of which we heard on *Chap.* xii. 16. And while it is called the *Wine of her Wrath*, is as much to ſay, as the Strength of Wrath. And being deſigned *the Wine of the Wrath of her Fornication*, points out the Spring of her Indignation: It all flows from their ſpiritual and fleſhly Filthineſs; for nothing is more ordinary than to find *Idolaters* and *prophane Perſons* inveterate Enemies to the Saints.

2. How ſhe uſed it, *She made to drink*: Others, but not ſo near, render it, *She gave to drink*. In ſhort, the Force of the Expreſſion is, ſhe intoxicate them therewith; as we have it in our common Way of Expreſſion, *She drank all Nations*, i. e. ſhe obliged them either by Fraud or Force: She not only laid a Stumbling-block before the Nations, but conſtrained them to uſe it, tho' it was in its own Nature moſt dangerous, yea, deſtructive; ſo that here is Iniquity eſtabliſhed by a Law. She forced Men into her idolatrous Practices.

3. To whom ſhe applied this, *All the Nations*. It was not a few; nay, theſe Beaſts had their Influence thro' all the habitable World; no Place or Perſon was free from their curſed Endeavours of promoting Blaſphemy and Idolatry: And, to be ſure, the

the more ſpreading an Evil is, the more does it expoſe to the deſtroying Stroke of God's Wrath.

As to the Application of this Emblem Expoſitors are not agreed. Some make it refer to the ſame Period with the former: But this is hard, when the *Spirit of God* is at Pains to tell us this Angel followed the other, ſo that he was diſtinct from, and poſterior to him; and therefore it muſt point at ſome Period after the Reformation, but whether paſt, or to come, I venture not to determine: Yet, if it be paſt either in Whole or Part, it is but lately. Nor can I, from my Acquaintance with Hiſtory, place it much ſooner than the Beginning of the eighteenth Century, when we will find the great Doctrines in *France, Spain, Swizerland, Britain,* &c. were theſe that ſtand in the greateſt Oppoſition to *Popery*; as, *That the Pope is Antichriſt, the Church of* Rome *is idolatrous in all the Steps of her Worſhip, Juſtification is only by Faith in Jeſus Chriſt,* &c. Theſe, and others of the like Nature, were the Grounds upon which the Saints ſtated their Sufferings, and gave Teſtimony againſt *Babylon*, proclaiming her Downfall, at the Stake, upon the Rack, and the Ladder. Yet I will not ſay but more of this may be further expected; nor does there want ſome Appearance from the *Pope's* preſſing the *Conſtitution* he calls *Unigenitus*, and the Oppoſition it is meeting with in *France* and other Places. Tho' this Voice makes not ſuch a Noiſe in the World as the Reformation did, yet it is no Secret.

9 And the third Angel followed them, ſaying with a loud Voice, If any Man worſhip the Beaſt, and his Image, and receive his Mark in his Fore-head, or in his Hand,

10 The ſame ſhall drink of the Wine of the Wrath of God, which is poured out without Mixture into the Cup of his Indignation; and he ſhall be tormented with Fire and Brimſtone, in the Preſence of the holy Angels, and in the Preſence of the Lamb.

11 And the Smoke of their Torment aſcendeth up for ever and ever: And they have no Reſt Day nor Night, who worſhip the Beaſt, and his Image, and whoſoever receiveth the Mark of his Name.

Here is a terrible Certification againſt all that continue in Communion with the Beaſt. We may notice, each of theſe Angels is more expreſs than another, ſo the ſecond had more than the firſt, and this third has more than either, yea, or both. We had ſaid all needful about the third Herauld on the other two; and ſo it remains we conſider, 1. Againſt whom this Denunciation is made. 2. What is denounced againſt them. 3. The Aggravations of this Miſery when execute.

I. Theſe againſt whom this *Angel* directs his Certification, *v.* 9. *If any Man worſhip the Beaſt,* &c. It is propoſed conditionally, not as if it were a doubtful Thing whether there were any ſuch Perſons, but to eſtabliſh the Connexion betwixt thoſe Characters here given, and the Wrath after-denounced; that, as ſure as they were ſuch, ſo ſurely ſhould theſe Judgments be inflicted upon them, if they did not repent. Again, this is expreſſed by an *indefinite Particular*, which has the Force of an *univerſal*, and is of a very extenſive Meaning, *any Man*, i. e. of whatſoever Nation, Quality, Age, Sex or Employ; they will be all ſerved one Way, from the greateſt Sovereign, to the meaneſt Beggar. As for the Particulars of this Character, we conſidered them all at length, on *Chap.* xiii. 8, 15, 16. which muſt have the ſame Senſe in this Place, as there.

II. There is the Wrath denounced againſt thoſe Perſons, *v.* 10. Theſe Judgments are by ſome thought to be the Torments of Hell; if they be not, we are ſure of two Things; 1. They are advanced in ſuch Terms, as might well deſcribe the Miſery of the Damned. 2. They are next to the Pains of Hell, and no doubt introductory thereto, if Warning be not taken. But we would look nearer the Words, where three Things enhanſe theſe Plagues;

1. They are internal; *They ſhall drink of the Wine of the Wrath of God, which is poured out without Mixture into the Cup of his Indignation.* I know, in Scripture, a *Cup* points out a *Portion*, whether of Comfort or Croſs, and has this Deſignation, becauſe God in his Wiſdom meaſures both Rewards and Puniſhments. Thus, *Cup* is taken for Comforts, *Pſal.* xxiii. 5. *My Cup runneth over*: And for Judgments alſo, *Pſal.* xi. 6. *Upon the Wicked he ſhall rain Snares, Fire and Brimſtone; this is the Portion of their Cup.* Where it is taken for Miſery, whether internal or external. And to the ſame Purpoſe, but nearer the Words, *Pſal.* lxxv. 8. *In the Hand of the Lord is a Cup, and the*

Wine is red, it is full of Mixture, and he poureth out the ſame, but the Dregs thereof all the Wicked of the Earth ſhall wring out and drink. Some think this a Parallel, but I am of Opinion they are miſtaken: The Diſcovery of this Miſtake may give Light to the Text; there is no Mixture in our Text, which is mentioned in the Quotation, which obſtructs much their being Parallels: Beſides, the Mixture mentioned by the Pſalmiſt, is of Plagues, where the heavieſt, like a Sedement, fall to the Bottom; and this is the Portion of the Wicked. But in our Text, where it is ſaid, there is no *Mixture*, I take it to be meant of *Mercy*, for there will not be one Grain of Mercy in the whole Compoſition: Such a Portion became them who ſhewed no Mercy on the Saints; and now God meets them in their own Way, without any Mixture of Mercy, but all his Dealings toward them are unmixed Wrath. Whence it appears theſe Texts are not to the ſame Purpoſe; tho' indeed there is a great Harmony betwixt them. Again, tho'a *Cup* may ſignify Judgments indifferently, whether outward or inward, when it is wrapt up in one Phraſe; yet this will not hinder it to be of a more limited Senſe, when the Diſtribution of the Text requires it, as here, where the following Clauſe contains an Account of their external Sorrows, and ſo, of Courſe, this is to point at their inward, eſpecially that we are ſure *their Sorrows ſhall be multiplied that haſten after other gods*, and that the Judgment of *Babylon* will be both *outward* and *inward*, as will afterwards appear. We read alſo of terrible *inward* Plagues, when the Curſe of God *cometh into the Bowels as Water, and as Oil into the Bones*, Pſal. cix. 18. Yet I ſhall not affirm that this will altogether be the firſt Part of their Miſery, tho' certainly the Laſhes of God's Juſtice upon a guilty Conſcience, are a great deal more diſtracting, than any outward Calamity whatſoever. No doubt, when the Vials begin to diſcharge themſelves, their Spirit will be in great Bitterneſs, which will increaſe as their outward Sorrows do.

But ſtill we have ſomewhat more to notice in this Account of their *inward* Plagues: As, 1. This Judgment is in Wrath, it is a Draught of the ſcalding hot Wrath of God. 2. It is *unmixed*; no Mercy or Favour, or the leaſt Mitigation therein. 3. 'Tis in a Cup of *Indignation* or *Anger*. A Parent may ſmite, but it is with Pity and Reluctancy, but this is in Fury. 4. It is *inevitable*, for there is no Evaſion for them.

2. Theſe Judgments are external, *He ſhall be tormented with Fire and Brimſtone*; or, which is nearer the Original, *in Fire and Brimſtone*; which denotes their great Miſery, and no doubt alludes to the Overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*. It has theſe two Concomitants of the Miſery they ſhall be in, 1. That it ſhall be ſharp and exquiſite. 2. That it will be as lothſom as painful, for their Fire will be fed with Brimſtone.

3. Their Judgments will be greatned from the Spectators, *In the Preſence of the holy Angels, and the Preſence of the Lamb.* It matters not much tho' by *Angels* we ſhould underſtand thr Heavenly Hoſt; yet I rather incline to think by *Angels* we may mean the Church of *Chriſt* upon Earth; for ſo we have them deſigned, Chap. xii. 7. *Michael and his Angels.* This will make the Senſe round, and be a no ſmall Aggravation of their Sorrows, that they were to ſuffer them in the View of theſe they had hated and perſecuted, and whom yet they will hate, tho' they want Power to harm. Then the Saints will be rejoicing, while their Enemies are roaring: But I ſhall break no Squares upon the Senſe of *Angels*, the Meaning is full any Way.

III. The Aggravations of the Miſery of the Followers of the Beaſts, *v.* 11. which we only notice in ſo many Words, there being no Difficulty in them which will not fall in on Chap. xix. (1.) Their *Plagues* will ſtill be *growing*. Tho' they be great at the firſt, they come not then to their Height; For *the Smoke of their Torment is aſcending*, i. e. prevailing. (2.) Theſe Plagues will be *laſting*, therefore it is added, *for ever and ever.* God was pleaſed in Righteouſneſs to ſmite, and ſeverely, a revolting People; yet there were always additional Comforts in their Lot, *Yet will I not make a full End of you*: But here, when the Plagues of God begin to attack *Antichriſt*, they will be carried on to his utter Deſtruction. (3.) Theſe Plagues will be without *Intermiſſion*, or Reſpite; and therefore it is ſaid, *They have no Reſt Day nor Night.* The Deſcription of ſuch as are to fall by theſe Plagues is again repeated, to declare the Certainty of the Thing, and to make the Impreſſion the deeper.

From all which it is evident, that *Miniſtry* repreſented by this *Angel*, will be a moſt occulate and free one; but how to apply this, is not ſo eaſy. Some tell us, It is paſt and gone. It cannot be denied, there have been, and are a great Number of faithful, able, and zealous Miniſters, thro' the World, who have not been wanting to diſcover the true Marks of the Beaſts, and to warn againſt Communion with them, in leſs or more; Yet theſe Texts ſeem to point at a Period when the Contention for the Faith will be moſt open, and by a great Number of Advocates, whoſe Furniture will no doubt correſpond to their Work: I reckon it has not as yet taken Place, either as to the whole or main, and offer theſe Reaſons of the Conjecture;

1. Be-

1. Becauſe there is a prevailing *Spirit of Popery*, even in reformed Churches, who ſtick cloſs to the Principles of *Rome* in many Things, and in ſome Things to theſe of *Mahomet*, the Agreement of which we above cleared: And it is not to be thought, that *Satan will caſt out Satan*. Leſt this be thought a heavy Charge, I ſhall prove it is no Calumny: For, 1. Whole Churches are leavened with the Doctrine of *Arminius* (and that more coarſe than ever it was taught by himſelf) degrading the Merits of Chriſt, by coupling their own Righteouſneſs with his in the Matter of Juſtification, and diſclaiming the Doctrine of Sanctification, both in its Author the *Holy Spirit*, and the Way of his Operation in *Regeneration*, &c. All this is aſcribed to Man's *Free-will* and *natural Strength*, which I ſhewed is as much *Mahometan* as *Popiſh*. 2. The Popiſh Pride, Ambition and Tyranny is copied by ſome reformed Churches, and aimed at by others, who go from Step to Step till they arrive at *Metropolitans*, *Patriarchs*, &c. ſo that, while theſe diſown the *Pope*'s Authority, they aſpire to that which is equivalent: Can that which is criminal in him be innocent in them? 3. The rejecting the Word of God, and introducing the Inventions of Men, as the Rule of Worſhip, ſavours rank of *Popery*, and the intolerable Burden of inſignificant Ceremonies has wormed out the very Vitals of Goſpel-worſhip.

2. The Toleration that is given almoſt every where to Men of the looſeſt Principles ſhows, that Time is not yet come, however fain ſome would flatter themſelves it is over: What Reformation can be expected, or how ſhall *Antichriſt* be expoſed as the *Son of Perdition*, while *Socinians*, who diſown two Perſons of the glorious Trinity; the Free-thinkers, void of all Religion, yea and that of moderate and reaſonable Reaſon itſelf; the *Quakers*, who at Bottom are the Spawn of *Jeſuites*, are openly indulged? And, even among the pureſt reformed Churches, are not ſome propagating the hateful Doctrines of the *Antinomians*?

3. An arrogant Spirit of Faction and Diviſion ſeems to poſſeſs the Profeſſors of the Truth: As if Goſpel-humility were no Grace, or a baſe-born Principle, every one vies with another who ſhall be moſt thought of, but not who ſhall be beſt; Not how they may reform the Failings of others, but how they may magniſy and expoſe them. Are not all theſe manifeſt Characters of *Hypocriſy*? How are ſuch capable of the Zeal neceſſary for the Truth of this Emblem? Nor can it be expected Times will mend, while theſe Things are in us and abound in us.

4. Abounding Profanity is a ſhrewd Evidence God will not honour this Generation effectually, to inveigh againſt the Beaſt, his Image, and their Worſhippers. Will we but conſider the common Perjury, habitual Swearing, Curſing, Intemperance, Uncleanneſs, *&c.* and perſwade ourſelves our Lot has fallen in that Period of the Church that will proclaim God's Righteouſneſs againſt the Enemies of Chriſt and his Goſpel?

Upon the whole, then we are to believe this Period ſpoken of under the Emblem of the third Angel is not come; and we ſhould pray, God may in Mercy haſten it, that a decayed Work of Reformation may again be revived, and that Error and all Iniquity may have their Mouths ſtopt.

12 Here is the Patience of the Saints; here are they that keep the Commandments of God, and the Faith of Jeſus.

13 And I heard a Voice from Heaven, ſaying unto me, Write, Bleſſed are the Dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their Labours, and their Works do follow them.

This ſeems to be the Concluſion or Application of all the *three Emblems*, where it ſeems reaſonable to look on theſe Verſes as no Part of the Words uttered by any of the Angels; but the 12 Verſe is a rational Deduction made by the Prophet from theſe Emblems; and the 13 Verſe is a Voice from Heaven, eſtabliſhing and confirming with a beautiful Amplification the foreſaid Inference. We view them in Order.

I. There is the Apoſtle's Inference from theſe three Emblems, *v.* 12. *Here is the Patience of the Saints*, &c. Some make this a Prophecy of Perſecution to the Church, and to contain an Exhortation to theſe three great Duties, *Patience*, *Holineſs* and *Faith*: But we had Occaſion to expoſe and refute this, on Chap. xiii. 10. for theſe two Verſes are ſo like other, and dropt in after the ſame Manner, we cannot doubt, what is the Senſe of them in the one Place, muſt be ſo in the other, *i. e.* to comfort the Church under all the Rage of the Beaſt and his Image, by aſſuring her theſe would come down, and that now the Time was come they ſhould meet with what they had long hop'd, and with

Patience waited for; ſo that it is a powerful Excitement to the Exerciſe of theſe Graces explained in the Parallel: Such Cordials as this are often adminiſtrate by the Holy Ghoſt to the afflicted People of God, as, 2 *Theſſ.* i. 6, 7. *It is a righteous Thing with God to recompenſe Tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you that are troubled Reſt with us.*

II. Next we have the Confirmation and Amplification of this Concluſion, by *a Voice from Heaven, ſaying, Write*; where we are certainly to underſtand that Place where *John* had ſeen the Throne, &c. Chap. iv. and ſo the Voice that he heard was the Voice of God ſent to counterbalance the Voice of the Beaſt and his Image, who curſe and damn all that ſubmit not to them; and here God bleſſes, while they curſe with Spite: Or it may be underſtood of the Voice of Chriſt, who, Chap. i. 11. had from Heaven given *John* a Commiſſion *to write*, which we have renewed in this Text, becauſe the Matter is of great Moment to the Church in her wreſtling State, to know that her Difficulties would have an End, and alſo to point the Certainty of the Thing. But I take this to be further wrapt up in the Command, *Write*, that the Matter was not to fall out for ſome Time after the Viſion, and therefore it muſt be recorded for the Ages to come. In the Voice itſelf we have, 1. The Maxim he was to write. 2. The Grounds thereof, contained alſo in the ſame Call.

1. The Maxim, *Bleſſed are the Dead which die the Lord, henceforth.* Becauſe this is a Paſſage moſt unjuſtly preſt by the Learned into their Service according to their different Views, I ſhall conſider it the more particularly, and therein notice theſe Parts;

(1.) The Subject ſpoken of, *The Dead which die in the Lord*: Which ſome take for thoſe who die a natural Death, and ſo the Meaning is, They are happy who are out of Time, for they ſhall neither ſee nor feel thoſe Calamities are to be in the World: But it ſeems hard to make ſuch a notable Introduction to ſo common and univerſally received a Truth, and which was as true before this, as ever it can be afterwards. Others again alter the Tranſlation, and turn *in the Lord, for the Lord*, i. e. for his Sake, and ſo it will ſignify the Martyrs: The Scriptures adduced to ground this will not uphold their Superſtructure; for their Deſign is to pave the Way to their Reſurrection, as they think they have it, Chap. xx. 4. and ſo it is an Encouragement to them, that the Time of their Freedom is at Hand, their Jubilee is approaching: But then, if there be no ſuch Reſurrection, this falls to the Ground; beſides, there is no Mention here of a *violent Death*, which however was neceſſary to ſupport their Scheme. That which I then take to be the Senſe of the Words is ſhortly this, After theſe three Angels have ſounded their Meſſage forth in the World, People will entertain other Thoughts of the deceaſed Saints than they had before; they pitied them, and were ready to believe their Condition very miſerable, while the Beaſts were in a toping State, but now they will own they had the beſt of it. The Apoſtle makes the Reverſe of this a great Abſurdity, 1 *Cor.* xv. 18. *They which are aſleep in Chriſt are periſhed*, i. e. they were Fools and mad Men, if the Principles of the *Sadducees*, &c. ſhould hold; but if theſe were falſe, then the Dead in the Lord were bleſſed. Or, if we pleaſe to bring this a little nearer, and by *dying in the Lord*, mean *Mortification*, which is introductory to a *ſpiritual Life*, then this proclaims the Deſireableneſs of their Condition, in Oppoſition to the *Beaſts* and their *Worſhippers*. We may ſafely join the laſt two together.

(2.) What is aſſerted of them, they are *bleſſed*, i. e. perfectly happy, and to be envied. In ſhort, *Bleſſedneſs* is a moſt comprehenſive Word, and takes in it all that is deſireable, and an Immunity from all theſe Things that might diſturb their Peace and Satisfaction.

(3.) The Time, *from henceforth*, i. e. from this Time, *viz.* of the Miniſtry of the *third Angel*; ſo we find the Word ordinarily to ſignify, *Mat.* xxvi. 29. *From henceforth I will drink no more of the Fruit of the Vine*, i. e. from the Time Chriſt ſpoke it; and ſo here it is to be oppoſed to the former State of the Church under the prevailing Power of the Beaſts for Six hundred and ſixty ſix Years, as has been before declared. This then is a Prophecy of the Enlargement of the Church, and the Encreaſe of the Reputation of her Members, when the *Beaſts* are dwindling away and filled with Horror.

2. There are the Grounds of this Maxim, in the reſt of the Verſe, which will help to clear the Senſe given of the former Maxim.

(1.) The Authority of the *Holy Ghoſt*; *Yea, ſaith the Spirit*: As for the Word, *Yea*, we ſee it a ſtrong Affirmation and Equivalent to *Amen*, 2 Cor. i. 20. *The Promiſes of God are in him yea, and in him amen.* And again, in this ſame Prophecy, *Rev.* i. 7. *Even ſo, amen.* By the *Spirit* we are to underſtand the *Spirit of God*, whom we had often under this plain Deſignation in the ſecond and third Chapters of this Prophecy: Nor will it be needful to enquire how the Spirit ſays ſo; ſome tell, in the Scriptures: But the Truth here ſeems to be immediately confirmed to *John* by the *Holy Ghoſt*, as the *Father*

or

or *Son* had done before, by a Voice from Heaven; and this confirms, that ſomething more than ordinary is couched up here.

(2.) *They ſhall reſt from their Labour.* This, to be ſure, is not to be underſtood of *all Work*, but of that Toil and *wreſtling Work* they had under the Prevalency of the *Beaſt*, who perplexed and diſtreſſed them: Now this will be over. I ſee not how this can be underſtood of their Reſt in their Graves, as a great many incline to take it; for that fell to the Share of all the Saints from the Beginning: But this is to point at the End of Perſecution, which will fall out after theſe three Angels Works are over; and this is a further Reaſon proving the Time of this third Angel is not yet come, ſeeing Perſecution is yet in the World.

(3.) *Their Works do follow them.* This appears to be eaſy after what is ſaid, for *Work* certainly differs from *Labour*: And now that their *hard Labour* is over, their *Work* will be eaſy, *i. e.* their Endeavours to propagate the Goſpel, and *Kingdom of Chriſt*, will advance apace; and they will be comforted, while they behold their Succeſs. All the Endeavours of the Church before ſeem'd to be loſt, but it will not be ſo then. However the Words may be explained and applied to good Purpoſes otherwiſe; yet, according to the Text, I ſee not how they can be taken in another Senſe in Context, which we ſee is moſt comfortable to the Church, and may be refreſhing to the longing Saints, that wait and hope for that happy Time.

14 And I looked, and behold a white Cloud, and upon the Cloud One ſate like unto the Son of Man, having on his Head a golden Crown, and in his Hand a ſharp Sickle.

This Verſe is the Introduction to the following Part of the Chapter; and, as all that is above, conſiſted in Words and Denunciations, this brings to hot Work againſt the *Beaſt* and his *Image*, and gives the prime Cauſe of all that is to follow; which, becauſe it will be moſt obſervable, is introduced with a very glorious and terrible Emblem of the *great Agent*. I cannot take this Perſon for any elſe but our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, becauſe it is his Buſineſs to accompliſh the Words of his Servants, *Iſa.* lxiv. 26. *He confirmeth the Word of his Servants, and performeth the Counſel of his Meſſengers.* He had before inſtructed them what to ſay, and now he comes to fulfil all they had ſaid. His Enemies ſhall be conſtrain'd to acknowledge all his Threatnings are verified to the utmoſt, *Zech.* i. 5, 6. *Your Fathers, where are they? and the Prophets, do they live for ever? But my Words and my Statutes, which I commanded my Servants, did they not take Hold of your Fathers? and they returned and ſaid, Like as the Lord of Hoſts thought to do to us according to our Ways, and according to our Doings, ſo hath he dealt with us.* It is true, this ſeems to reſpect the Convictions of a returning People, but ſtill the Impenitent will be convinced of the Equity of the Sentence, and that the Judgments do exactly in all Points correſpond to the *Denunciations*, as well as their *Guilt*. This will be further manifeſt, when we conſider this Emblem of the *great Judge*, and what is advanced about him; as, 1. His Character. 2. His Poſture. 3. The Enſign of his Majeſty. 4. The Inſtrument of his Juſtice: All which compoſe the moſt notable Encouragement to the Church.

1. The Character, *One like unto the Son of Man.* Of this we heard on Chap. i. 13. And to be ſure the ſame Thing is to be meant here, *i. e. Jeſus Chriſt, God-Man*, the Redeemer of the World; nor am I troubled with the Mark of Aſſimulation, which I accounted for in that Place: If the Senſe there given diſpleaſe, I ſhewed the whole of this Prophecy to conſiſt of Viſions or Emblems; and to allow this to be one, it will be no hard Matter: And, we are under no Neceſſity to take this perſonally, which diſguſts a great many, tho', I own, their Reaſons are not very cogent.

2. His Poſture, *Sitting upon a white Cloud.* We read frequently of God's making the *Clouds* his *Chariots*, or *Horſes*, in a prophetick Stile, eſpecially when he works Vengeance upon his People's Enemies, and Deliverance for them, *Iſa.* xix. 1. *Behold, the Lord rideth upon a ſwift Cloud, and ſhall come into* Egypt, *and the Idols of* Egypt *ſhall be moved at his Preſence, and the Heart of the* Egyptians *ſhall melt in the Midſt of it.* When the Lord did appear in Behalf of *David*, it is ſaid, *Pſal.* xviii. 10. *He did flee upon the Wings of the Wind.* And juſt ſo, *Mat.* xxiv. 30. *They ſhall ſee the Son of Man coming in the Clouds.* We had this Expreſſion alſo, *Chap.* i. 7. But there is an Addition here, which I no where meet with in Scripture: This Cloud is ſaid to be *white*; the ſame Colour is uſed by the ſame Word, to expreſs a Part of Chriſt's *Tranſfiguration*, Mat. xvii. 2. *And his Raiment was white as Light.* Many a *dark Cloud* the Church had met with before, but there is a bright Cloud when her Deliverance is

to be wrought, and the Vengeance of the Temple to be execute. It would appear this *white Cloud* is deſigned for his People's Comfort; for the *Sickle* is againſt their Enemies: Nor can I underſtand any Thing by this *white Cloud* further than what was meant by the *white Horſe* in the firſt Seal, *Chap.* vi. 2. So that, at that Day, we have Reaſon to expect a glorious and bright Day of the Goſpel, accompanied with Chriſt's ſpecial and powerful Preſence. That it is added, *he ſate upon it*; I take to mean the Continuance of his efficacious Preſence.

3. The Enſign of his Majeſty and Victory, *Having on his Head a golden Crown.* It is ſaid alſo, Chap. vi. 2. *A Crown was given him*, but the Metal is only mentioned here, and is the ſame the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of, *Pſal.* xxi. 3. *Thou ſetteſt a Crown of pure Gold upon his Head.* This points out the Value of it, together with its Laſt and Duration; and ſeems to be another Step of that Prophecy, *Chap.* xi. 17. *That he would take to him his great Power, and reign.* Chriſt will then be glorious in the Eyes of all his People, and terrible to his Enemies.

4. The Inſtrument of his Juſtice, *In his Hand a ſharp Sickle.* This Word, rendred *Sickle*, comes from a Root, to *gather*, or *pluck*, or *cut*; and ſo it is indifferently uſed to expreſs the Inſtrument with which they cut down the Corn, called a *Sickle* or *Hook*; or that by which they mow down the Hay, and is called a *Syth*; or that by which they cut down the Grapes and gather them in. It is uſually (eſpecially when it ſignifies a reaping Inſtrument) of a circular Form, becauſe fitteſt to gather into the Hand what is to be cut down. Here it is called a *ſharp Sickle*, to ſhew that nothing can reſiſt it. Our Lord uſeth the ſame Word in the Parable of the Sower, *Mark* iv. 29. It may be thought, a *Sceptre*, rather than a *Sickle*, would become the Hand of a crown'd *Head*; but here the *Sickle* is an Inſtrument of War, and this King is in the Field of Battle, and is about to make great Slaughter among them. It would be unaccountable for any, from what is here advanced, to condeſcend upon theſe Means or Inſtruments he will uſe when he comes to execute the Vengeance due upon his Enemies; it is enough for us, from the Analogy, to know, that many will be cut down in a little Time.

Having thus ſeen our Lord in his glorious and terrible *Equipage*, we are next to view, in the following Verſes, his tremenduous Judgments upon his Enemies, delivered to us in ſuch Terms as might well compoſe a Map of the *laſt* and *general Judgment*, which alſo many Expoſitors take to be the Scope of it; but, in regard the *ſeven Vials* are poured out afterwards, and the thouſand Years Jubilee of the Church is to follow that, and both theſe before the End of the World, it ſeems reaſonable we ſhould underſtand this of ſome ſpecial temporal Judgment, introductory to the Vials; and the rather, that we meet with Expreſſions every whit as ſolemn in the *ſixth Seal*, Chap. vi. 12. *&c.* and that this Chapter is wholly the Illuſtration of that Seal. It is further to be noticed, that in the *ſixth Seal* there are two Parts, one in the Cloſe of *Chap.* vi. and the other in the ſeventh Chapter: The preceeding Part of this 14th Chapter ſeems to illuſtrate what of that Seal is in *Chap.* vii. and, I would think, theſe laſt ſix Verſes are to be look'd upon as the Illuſtration of the firſt Part: That the laſt Part of that *Seal* is here explain'd before the firſt, is, to tell us both will go on at once, the one pertaining to the Comfort of the Church, and the other to the Terror of her Enemies; and that this is laſt pitched on here, is to aſſure us, the further Progreſs this Seal makes, the greater will the Beaſt's Miſery be.

That this *Judgment* is diſtinct from the *Vials*, ſeems to be evident from Chap. xv. 1. where we read of the ſeven laſt Plagues, which plainly ſuppoſes ſome Plague or Plagues did preceed them: And it is moſt eaſy and natural to believe theſe preceeding Plagues are nothing elſe than what we have mentioned in the Cloſe of this Chapter, and under the ſeven Trumpets, from whom I incline alſo to think this differs, becauſe this is under the *ſixth Seal*, and thoſe under the *ſeventh*. That this Judgment is in ſuch Expreſſions as might become the Day of Judgment at the laſt, is, becauſe it is a ſure Pledge thereof, and in ſome Manner the Type of it, as the Deſtruction of the *Jewiſh* Common-wealth was made, by our Lord, an Emblem of the laſt and general Judgment. We have here two Emblems, 1. Of the Harveſt, to *v.* 17. The other of the Vintage to the End.

15 And another Angel came out of the Temple, crying with a loud Voice, to him that ſate on the Cloud, Thruſt in thy Sickle, and reap, for the Time is come for thee to reap, for the Harveſt of the Earth is ripe.

16 And

16 And he that ſate on the Cloud, thruſt in his Sickle on the Earth, and the Earth was reaped.

This is an Account of the Judgment of God upon his Enemies, under the Notion and Emblem of the *Harveſt*. It is no extraordinary Thing in Scripture, thus to deſcribe the Effects of *Divine Diſpleaſure* in ſuch Terms; as we ſee in the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Chap.* li. 33. *Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, the God of* Iſrael, *The Daughter of* Babylon *is like a threſhing Floor, it is Time to threſh her: Yet a little While, and the Time of her Harveſt ſhall come.* I have little Difficulty to believe, the Apoſtle, in this Place, alludes to that of the Prophet; for there is Mention, 1. Of *Babylon*, 2. Of the due Time, 3. Of the Harveſt; which are all here mentioned. The reſt of the Emblem we have in *Joel*, Chap. iii. 13. *Put ye in the Sickle, for the Harveſt is ripe.* And it is confeſſed on all Hands, that none of theſe Texts concern the *laſt Judgment*, and ſo I conclude of this: Where I ſhall view, 1. The Mover. 2. The Method he uſed. 3. The Iſſue.

I. The Mover. Our Lord having prepared himſelf as in the former Verſe, waits, as it were, till he be deſired and enquired; and who ſhould do this, but his own People, here repreſented by *another Angel*? a Character given the Church, eſpecially *Miniſters*, not to oppoſe them to *Chriſt*, who is not called an *Angel* here; but to diſtinguiſh them from the preceeding three *Angels*, who had come with ſhrill Warnings to the *Worſhippers* of the *Beaſt*: And their Voice being ſlighted by the moſt Part, the Lord raiſes up another Generation, who neglect the Beaſt and his Followers, and turn themſelves to God by Prayer and Supplication againſt *Babylon*. This *Angel* is ſaid *to come out of the Temple*; this we explained on Chap. xi. 1. Nor do I ſee how we can take it in any other Senſe here, than for the Church. As for a Variety of Opinions concerning both this *Angel* and the *Temple*, they thwart the Scope of the Place, as well as croſs the Significations the Authors put upon theſe Things in other Places; and ſo I paſs them. Some tell us, This *Temple* was in Heaven, I anſwer, All the Emblems of the ſecond Viſion were there; yet, to be ſure, theſe were but Figures of what was to be on Earth: For in the 1. *v.* of Chap. xi. we ſee the *outer Court* of the *Temple* was to be tread under Foot of the *Gentiles* for the Space of Forty two Months; tho' we are ſure, they cannot get to *Heaven* to *trample* any Thing there under Foot. If it be ſaid, What need this *Angel* go out of the *Temple*, could not his Prayers reach Chriſt in the Temple? Tho' one cannot be obliged to anſwer for all the Circumſtances of a prophetical Expreſſion, yet this is not unanſwerable; for, 1. This may be ſaid of the Angel, to bear Correſpondence with the Emblem of *Chriſt* on the *white Cloud*, for he was not ſeen there before by the Apoſtle: But no ſooner is he there, than the *Angel* accoſts him. 2. This might be to ſhew *John* the Diligence of the Church in their Innovations, following Chriſt wherever he is. 3. In the Beginning of the xi. Chap. we find the Temple in a Manner ſhut up and ſurrounded by the *Gentiles*, but under this Seal they get Enlargement.

II. The Method this Angel uſed, in the reſt of the Verſe; where we have, 1. The Voice ſpoken. 2. The Arguments uſed to preſs the Deſire.

1. The Voice and Words uttered by the Angel, *He cried with a loud Voice to him that ſate on the Cloud, Thruſt in thy Sickle.* A great many take this as a Command; but, becauſe they are ſtraitned how a *created Angel* ſhould give Orders to Chriſt, ſome by the *Angel* underſtand the *Father*: But this is juſtly rejected by a great many, upon this Reaſon, That the *firſt* Perſon of the *Glorious Trinity* is never called in Scripture an *Angel*, no, nor the *ſecond* either, but with Relation to his Office of *Mediation*. Others ſay, and think they fairly eſcape this Difficulty thereby, That this is a created *Angel* ſent out of the Temple by the *Father* to the *Mediator*, with Inſtructions: Yet, if we conſider this, it is every Whit as fooliſh as the former; for the Son was ſufficiently inſtructed before, of all he was to do: Nor can any Conjecture be made, why an Envoy ſhould paſs from the *Father* to the *Son*, unleſs it be too much to humour the *Popiſh Conceit* of a State like to worldly Kingdoms affected by the *Godhead*, which is ſo weak, as not deſerve further Conſideration. That which I take to be the Senſe of it, is, according to *Pereus* and others, that this is an Emblem of the *Supplication* of the Church to *Chriſt* againſt the *Beaſt*: This I am ready to believe can be juſtified from Scripture in its ſeveral Parts, which I ſhall diſtinctly conſider;

(1.) This Voice is ſaid to be a *Cry*, an ordinary Deſignation of *Prayer*, 2 Sam. xxii. 7. *In my Diſtreſs I cried unto the Lord, and he did hear.* Neh. ix. 27. *When they cried, thou heardſt them from Heaven.* And ſo, *Exod.* viii. 12. Moſes *cried unto the Lord.* This Word denotes the Intenſneſs of the Heart and Affections.

(2.) It is ſaid with a *loud Voice* he cried: Not as if Chriſt could not otherwiſe have heard, but, to ſhow he did it openly and avowedly, they pray againſt *Antichriſt* to his Face, and are not afraid; as the Prophet *cried againſt the Altar at* Bethel, with a loud Voice, 1 *Kings* xiii. 2. Again, this is added to ſhew their *Fervour* and Earneſtneſs in the Thing; ſo we have a loud Voice taken in Scripture, *Ezek.* viii. 18. *Though they cry in mine Ears with a loud Voice, yet will I not hear them.*

(3.) The Petition itſelf, *Put* or *thruſt*, or, according to ſome, *Send in thy Sickle and reap.* This is a deſtructive Weapon, and, while there is an Alluſion to *Harveſt*, it ſays a great many were to be cut down. It is not worth while to dwell upon that Difficulty, That it is advanced imperatively; for ſo are moſt of the Petitions in Scripture, but this is acknowledged.

The only Difficulty is, How the Church ſhould know the Son of Man or Chriſt to be in ſuch Readineſs to cut down ſome conſiderable Part of the *Worſhippers* of the *Beaſt*, that they could time their Supplications ſo accurately? Anſwer 1. No doubt but the Church will be bleſt with a *Spirit of Wiſdom* and Underſtanding from *God*, whereby they ſhall be enabled to make more than probable Conjectures about theſe Things. 2. There may be about this Time ſome *rational Prognoſticks*, as States leagueing together againſt the Man of Sin, and more than a wonted Zeal appear in all Parts where the Goſpel is in Purity. 3. There will be ſeen ſome Things in the *Beaſt* and his *Image*, as their growing worſe and worſe, taking Headlong Meaſures, *&c.* preſaging the Wrath of God not to be far off; as it is added in the Cloſe of the Text, the *Harveſt of the Earth is ripe.* So that they may have Ground to cry without a ſpecial Revelation, which alſo God may be pleaſed to give: But, be that as it will, the Church has Ground enough to cry aloud, from this Prophecy.

2. The Arguments uſed by this Angel to preſs his Petition, which are two,

(1.) From the Seaſon, *For the Time is come for thee to reap.* We read always of an appointed Time, which flows alſo from the Alluſion to Harveſt, *Iſa.* lxiii. 4. *For the Day of Vengeance is in mine Heart, and the Year of my Redemption is come.* And yet as plainly, *Iſa.* xxxiv. 8. *For is is the Day of the Lord's Vengeance, and the Day of Recompence for the Controverſy of* Zion. So that the preciſe Time is fixed. But ſtill the Queſtion recurs, How ſhould this *Angel* know it? We find an Anſwer from *Daniel*, Chap. vii. 22. and Chap. viii. 26. *The Time came that the Saints poſſeſſed the Kingdom, and the Judgment ſits to take away the Beaſt's Dominion.* Hence we ſee how the Angel ſhall know; when the Reformation is come to a great Height, both as to Extent and Purity, this is likely to be the Hour for Chriſt to reap or cut down his Adverſaries.

(2.) Is from the Caſe of the Beaſt, *For the Harveſt of the Earth is ripe.* It matters not whether we make this the Ground of the former Reaſon, or a diſtinct Argument by itſelf. It reads in the Original, *The Harveſt of the Earth is dried*, which can be underſtood of nothing but the *Beaſt* and his *Followers*, that their Sins were Judgment-ripe. It is the wonted Method of God towards the worſt of Sinners, patiently to wait till they have brought their Sins to a Height, and then he lets fly the Arrows of his Indignation: So the Lord delayed the Deſtruction of the *Amorites for four Generations*, notwithſtanding the Promiſe of their Land to *Abraham*, upon this ſole Ground, *Gen.* xv. 16. *For the Iniquity of the* Amorites *is not yet full.* It would appear then, according to this Part of the Prophecy, that the Worſhippers of the *Beaſt* are yet to wax worſe than they are, before the Sickle of Judgment be ſent in amongſt them.

Some underſtand this of the Propagation of the Goſpel, and take the Senſe of it from our Lord's Words, *Mat.* ix. 37, 38. *The Harveſt truly is plenteous, but the Labourers few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the Harveſt*, &c. From this Text they labour mightily to fetch the ſeveral Parts of this Viſion to anſwer their Deſign: But I ſee not how they can meet, eſpecially that the whole Context is of Judgment, and againſt *Babylon*, who had deſpiſed the Offers of the Goſpel by the other *three Angels*; which we ſhewed, as for other Purpoſes, ſo for this, that the Followers of the Beaſt and his Image might be rendered inexcuſable. Nor did ever the Goſpel come under the Emblem of a *ſharp Sickle*, which is a deſtructive Inſtrument. And finally, the Application of this is to the *Earth*, a Term never in Uſe to ſignify the *Church*: Yea, the moſt ſharp-ſighted Interpreters of this Mind, have ſome Doubts whether this can be the true Senſe reof.

Others again ſuit the whole of it to the laſt and *general Judgment*, and are ſurpriſed how any can take it in another Senſe; and adduce a great many Paſſages out of the Goſpel, wherein they think the *Day of Judgment* is plainly deſcribed. But, in regard theſe Expreſſions we meet with in the Beginning of the ſixth Seal, are more adapted that Way, than any Thing we have here; and that there we proved they could not be taken

taken in that Senſe, we apprehend our Difficulty is over; nor need we be at Pains to examine all that is ſaid about it, but only refer to that Place.

Nor can I think them much nearer the Purpoſe, who by this mean the Deſtruction of the *whole Antichriſtian Kingdom*, which would be to bring this in after the ſeven Vials: And yet we are pretty confident this Judgment will lead the Dance to the *ſeven Trumpets*, which are to uſher in the ſeven Vials, or *laſt Plagues*. And from the whole I think we ſhould go in with the Senſe already given, and by this *Harveſt* to underſtand the *judical* Part of the *ſixth Seal*, as repreſented in the Cloſe of the ſixth Chapter.

III. The Iſſue of all this, *v. 16. And he that ſate on the Cloud, thruſt in his Sickle into the Earth, and the Earth was reaped.* This is a plain Return to the *Angel* in the former Verſe; and having made that a Petition, it follows of Courſe this muſt be the Anſwer thereof, *i. e. Chriſt* executing theſe Judgments upon the *Beaſt* and his *Followers*. We have given the Senſe of the Words before, except the Word *thruſt*, which ſhould be rendered *caſt*; which imports great Indignation and much Force: A Word which in no tolerable Senſe can agree to the gentle Operation of the *Goſpel*, which tho' it be very effectual and humbling, yet comes not in ſuch a Manner as deſerves this Expreſſion. Beſides, we know that hitherto the *Goſpel* has come to many a Place, when the whole Hearers, yea or the greateſt Part have not been brought over. I own we cannot determine who will prove this Sickle: Some ſay, The Saints, which ſometimes fall out; others think with more Reaſon, it will be ſome other Tool, as impious as themſelves, will be imployed; but we muſt leave the Solution of this to Providence.

17 And another Angel came out of the Temple which is in Heaven, he alſo having a ſharp Sickle.

18 And another Angel came out from the Altar, which had Power over Fire, and cried with a loud Voice to him that had the ſharp Sickle, ſaying, Thruſt in thy ſharp Sickle, and gather the Cluſters of the Vine of the Earth, for her Grapes are fully ripe.

19 And the Angel thruſt in his Sickle into the Earth, and gathered the Vine of the Earth, and caſt it into the great Wine-preſs of the Wrath of God.

20 And the Wine-preſs was troden without the City, and Blood came out of the Wine-preſs, even unto the Horſe Bridles, by the Space of a Thouſand and ſix hundred Furlongs.

This is the ſecond Emblem of God's Judgment from the *Vintage*. It is owned that in theſe Countries, where there is both a *Harveſt* and *Vintage*, that the *Vintage* ſucceeds the *Harveſt*: Which inſinuates ſomething to be further imported in this Emblem than what was in the former, becauſe it is to follow it; yet it would appear the Interval betwixt them will not be long, if we allude to the immediate Succeſſion of the *Vintage* to the *Harveſt*. Tho' there be ſome Difference amongſt Expoſitors as to the firſt, concerning its general Meaning; yet moſt agree, that a *Judgment* is pointed at in this, which in my Opinion removes the Grounds of Scruple about the firſt; for no Reaſon can be given, why the *Vintage* ſhould be an Emblem of Wrath, and that of the *Harveſt* a Figure of *Mercy*, unleſs there had been ſomething in the Text that neceſſarily required it. Beſides that, other Scriptures give Contenance to this; where Wickedneſs is compared to *Wine* and *Grapes*, Deut. xxxii. 32, 33. *Their Vine is the Vine of* Sodom, *and of the Fields of* Gomorrah; *their Grapes are Grapes of Gall, and their Cluſters are bitter: Their Vine is the Poiſon of Dragons, and the cruel Venome of Aſps.* I own that Mercies are repreſented by *Wine*, and ſo are the Fruits of the Spirit; yet it will not follow we are to take it ſo here, becauſe this is ſpoken of the *Wine* and *Grapes* of the Earth to be trode in the Wine-preſs of the *Wrath of God*, which can be no other *Wine* than that of the *Fornication* of *Babylon*, mentioned *v.* 8. Again, we find the Deſtruction of the Wicked compared to, and repreſented by the Treading of the Wine-preſs, *Iſa.* lxiii. 2, 3. *Wherefore art thou red in thine Apparel, and thy Garments like him that treadeth the Wine-fat? I have troden the Wine-preſs alone, and of the People there was none with me: For I will tread them in mine Anger, and trample them in my Fury; and their Blood ſhall be ſprinkled on my Garments, and I will ſtain all my Raiment.* We have the ſame Expreſſion, ſignifying great Diſtreſs, by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Lam. i. 15. *The Lord hath trode the Virgin, the Daughter of* Judah, *as in a Wine-preſs.*

Where we have to conſider, 1. The Agent. 2. The Mover. 3. The Action. 4. The Amplification of the Action.

I. The Agent deſcribed, *v.* 17. Where is, 1. His Deſignation. 2. Whence he came. 3. His Inſtrument of Juſtice.

1. His Deſignation, *Another Angel.* He is called *an Angel*, a Character not given to the *firſt Agent*, and ſo this muſt be another Agent. I ſee not how we can take this for a *Goſpel-Miniſtry*; for tho' God may impower them to denounce his Wrath upon his Enemies, yet we have no Promiſe or Precept that they ſhall be Executioners thereof. Nor ſee I any Neceſſity to make him an heavenly *Angel*, ſent down on this Errand; for God can raiſe up to himſelf on Earth a *Miniſter* of his *Juſtice*, which may be ſome earthly Power whom he will fit for this Work; but who it will be, Time only will diſcover. I ſee alſo no Reaſon to take this *Angel* for an Emblem of God's vindictive Juſtice, further than it repreſents the Inſtrument he will imploy, which may be a Man. Nor do we find the Juſtice, or other Perfections of God, repreſented by an Angel.

2. Whence he came, *Out of the Temple which is in Heaven.* This we muſt take in the ſame Senſe as, *v.* 15. and ſo we are to underſtand thereby the *Church*. And here we have a plain Difference betwixt this and the former Emblem; that of the Harveſt may be more immediately from God, this ſecond Blow may be the Work of ſome whom God ſhall imploy from the Church.

3. The Inſtrument of Juſtice, *He alſo hath a ſharp Sickle.* The Senſe of this we had, *v.* 14. only this muſt be meant with Alluſion to the Vintage, which requires an Inſtrument ſomewhat different from the Harveſt-Sickle, yet both are the ſame Word in the Original. Nor are we to doubt but this Angel will follow the Directions of him that *ſate on the white Cloud.*

II. The Mover, *v.* 18. Where, 1. The Perſon. 2. His Call. 3. The Reaſon thereof.

1. The Perſon *moving*: Where he is deſcribed as *another Angel*, which we are to take in the ſame Senſe with the Mover in the former Emblem; only that he is not the ſame, but differs from him particularly in theſe two;

(1.) As to the Place whence he came, not out of the Temple as did the other, but *he came out from the Altar*; which is to be taken in the ſame Senſe here, as *Chap.* xi. 1. where I ſhewed we are to underſtand *Worſhip* thereby. *Mede* adds, We ſhould underſtand alſo them that worſhip in the Court of the *Altar*; and ſo this *Angel* comes from the Multitude of *Goſpel-worſhippers.*

(2.) He differs from the reſt in this, that *he had Power* [Authority] *over Fire.* The moſt eaſy and natural Senſe of this is to be fetched from what we ſaid, *Chap.* xi. 5. and ſo the Meaning is, God will execute the Judgments they threaten. It would appear this will be a moſt zealous Miniſtry for God, and againſt his Enemies.

2. His Call by which he moved, *He cried with a loud Voice.* Where, tho' the Tranſlation be the ſame as *v.* 15. yet they differ much in the firſt Language. We ſhewed that 15. *v.* to be the Voice of a Supplicant to the great Hearer of Prayers, but this is a Charge given to a Fellow-Creature, whereby he ſtirs him up to his Duty; for the *firſt Voice* was to Chriſt, but this is to the Miniſter of his Will, *he that had the ſharp Sickle.* The Call itſelf (which is double) according to the Uſe of *Vintage-Hooks*, *Thruſt in thy ſharp Sickle*, i. e. to cut down the Cluſters, for to this Uſe it is framed, and after that *gather the Cluſters together*; for that crooked Inſtrument is both Ways imployed; they are gathered together, that they may be the more eaſily handled.

3. The Reaſon, *For her Grapes are fully ripe.* *Grapes* muſt not be cut down ſooner, becauſe then their Juice is very ſowre and unwholeſom; nor later, for then they putrify. When this is applied to the *Beaſt* and his *Followers*, it ſhews they will at this Time be *Judgment-ripe*: They had deſpiſed all former Offers of Mercy, and Threatnings, and by neither won to any Senſe, no nor by Judgments; and therefore them they are to meet with, a Sample of what the *Vials* will finiſh upon them.

III. The Action, *v.* 19. which has two Parts agreeable to the Call, 1. *He put in his Sickle, and gathered the Wine of the Earth*; the Senſe of which was given before. 2. *He caſt them into the great Wine-preſs of the Wrath of God.* We read twice of *caſt* here, which was explained above, *v.* 16. Properly the *Wine-preſs* ſignifies a large and capacious Veſſel, where they throw all the Grapes in order to be trode. But here there is a great Debate what ſhould be the Meaning of this prophetical Expreſſion: Nor indeed do I find any Thing but Conjectures offered. In general, it ſeems to be ſome bloody Engagement, one or mo, I ſee not how any can determine; only this, it will be ſo notable, that it cannot miſs to be known by others, as well as felt by them. Some think it the ſame we read of at *Armageddon*, Chap. xvi. 16. but as far as I can ſee

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in this Prophecy, they ſeem to be different Actions, and at different Times; for we take this to be under the *ſixth Seal*, whereas the other is to fall out under the *ſeventh*.

IV. The Amplification of this Action, *v.* 20. Where, 1. The Place. 2. The Slaughter. 3. The Extent of both.

1. The Place, *The Wine-preſs was troden without the City.* We need be at no Strait by this *City* to underſtand *Babylon*, deſcribed above, *v.* 8. for this is the Execution of theſe Threatnings; ſo that this is the Beaſt *Popery*, and his Image *Mahometaniſm*. This Slaughter is ſaid to be without that *City*, yet near it, as the Expreſſion implies; yea, ſo near it as make it totter, but at ſuch a Diſtance as not overturn it. It is not poſſible to condeſcend upon the particular Spot, one or mo, where this Action will be, but it would appear a Part of it will be where each of theſe prevail, *i. e.* both in *Aſia* and *Europe*. And while it is compared to *Treading*, it ſays the Action will be cloſs; and tho' the Victory may coſt the Saints Labour, yet it will not be bloody on their Part: As he that treads the Wine-preſs will work hard, yet not endanger his Life; for Chriſt will be on their Front and Rearward.

2. The Slaughter, *Blood run out of the Wine-preſs even unto the Horſe Bridles.* This is an hyperbolical Expreſſion, as we find many in Scripture, eſpecially in Threatnings, as particularly againſt the Enemies of God; ſo we find God threaten *Egypt* in very amazing Terms, *Ezek.* xxxii. 5, 6. *I will lay thy Fleſh upon the Mountains, and will fill the Valleys with thy Height: I will alſo water with thy Blood the Land wherein thou ſwimmeſt, even to the Mountains, and the Rivers ſhall be full of thee.* Expoſitors take the Grammatical Senſe of that Clauſe, *I will water with thy Blood the Land wherein thou ſwimmeſt*, to be this, I will make thy Land with thy Blood, ſo as they may ſwim in it. And again, *Pſal.* lxviii. 23. *Thy Foot dipt in the Blood of thine Enemies.* It would be deep, when they dipt their Foot in Blood as in a Pool. The plain Senſe of this then, to wave all Diſpute, ſeems to be, there would be an extraordinary Effuſion of Blood. Theſe who tell us there are Conduits in the Wine-preſſes to convey the expreſſed Liquor into proper Veſſals, are not one Ace nearer their Purpoſe, eſpecially when it is ſaid in the

3. Place, That the Extent of it was *by the Space of a Thouſand and ſix hundred Furlongs.* It was a very common Way of meaſuring Ground by Furlongs, and is not quite in Deſuetude: Every eight Furlongs make a Mile, ſo that in 1600 Furlongs there are two hundred Miles; and this brought to a Square, will make 50 Miles every Way. Some have very odd Notions about this, and nothing to ſupport them; nor indeed has any Opinion any ſufficient Ground. Some make it the Dimenſions of the Field of Battle; but whatever Way we meaſure the 200 Miles, this is moſt improbable. Others ſay, This contains the Dimenſions of the Ground will be watered by their Blood in the Flight. I own it more modeſt to delay any Deciſion, till God, in his Providence, give it; but it is not in the leaſt to be doubted it will then caſt up, and to Satisfaction, as many obſcure Paſſages of Prophecy have done. I ſhall only, from the Whole, remark a few Corolaries.

1. This can, in no Propriety of Speech, be applied to the *Day of Judgment*, where there will be no Blood ſhed, for Soul and Body of the Wicked will be protruded to *Hell*. Beſides, one might modeſtly affirm 50 ſquare Miles would not be ſufficient to contain all the Wicked from the Beginning.

2. That theſe two Emblems do not reſpect the ſame Thing. There are a great many Differences, that the very reading of them will caſt up; yet it would appear, as the ſecond will not be long after the firſt, ſo it will be a great deal more bloody than it.

3. It would appear that this ſhuts up the ſixth Seal, and is particularly the Explication of that Part of it, from *Chap.* vi. 12. and ſo the three interjected Chapters, which illuſtrate five of the ſix Seals, are in our Way explained. And now we are to connect the following fifteenth Chapter with the eleventh Chapter, and thereby carry on the Threed of the Prophecy, which makes the *ſeven Vials* to be comprehended in the ſeventh Trumpet, of which we ſpoke above.

CHAP. XV.

AS all the other *ſix Trumpets* had their proper Emblems, ſo we find this *ſeventh* to have: And becauſe this laſt is to be the moſt comprehenſive Period of the World, we have the Solemnity heightned, that introduces the ſame, in this Chapter; and the Emblems multiplied in the next, *&c.*

In this Chapter we have two preparatory Emblems to what we meet with in the following Chapter; 1. The Contents of *Chap.* xvi. 1. 2. The great Solemnity and Preparation to repreſent theſe great Events, to *v.* 5. 3. A further Enlargement on what we have, *v.* 1. to the Cloſe.

1 AND I ſaw another Sign in Heaven, great and marvellous, ſeven Angels, having the ſeven laſt Plagues; for in them is filled up the Wrath of God.

This is an Emblem of *God's dire Juſtice* againſt his Enemies, and is a Figure of the Arſenal of his Wrath. It is ſaid, *He ſaw the ſame in Heaven*: We read not of his being removed from the *Sand of the Sea*, where he was, *Chap.* xii. 1. There is ſome Struggle where the Apoſtle was when he had this Viſion; ſome ſay in *Heaven*, others, He was on *Earth*, in the ſame Place where he had the Emblems of the Beaſts; and think it reaſonable it ſhould be ſo, that he might in one Spot have the View of their Riſe, Greatneſs, and Fall. I own this Argument to have little Force in it; yet it is plain, he might have a Viſion in Heaven, while himſelf was on the Earth. And that in the Courſe of this Prophecy we have a pointed Account of all his Movements, we may reaſonably conclude, he continued in the former Place while he had this Viſion, which I indeed take to be altogether new; which will plainly appear, when we conſider, 1. The general Account of it. 2. The particular Parts thereof.

I. The general Account, *Another Sign in Heaven, great and marvellous.* This ſeems to be mainly deſigned to engage the Prophet's Attention to the Manifeſtation, and ours at the Conſideration thereof. It is called a *Sign*; the ſame Word is rendered *Wonder*, Chap. xii. 1. The Senſe is, what he ſaw now (for he had met with nothing like it ſince *Chap.* xii.) was a moſt ſignificant Emblem. And he adds three Adjuncts thereto, whereas that, *Chap.* xii. has but one. 1. *Another*; not only diſtinguiſhing it from the other Emblems in the *ſix Trumpets*, but alſo from the Judgments wrapt up under the Emblems of Harveſt and Vintage in the former Chapter; ſo that this has ſomething in it diverſe from them. 2. It is *great.* Of this we ſpoke, *Chap.* xii. 1. 3. It is *wonderful*, or *marvellous*, or *ſurprizing*; which ſhews it was unexpected, and leſs feared by the Beaſt, than hoped for the Church.

II. The particular Account of the Emblem itſelf, which is a Confirmation of the laſt Property, that it was *marvellous.* Here we would conſider the ſeveral Parts of this Emblem: As, 1. The Perſons. 2. Their Number. 3. Their Furniture.

1. The Perſons, *Angels*: We had often Occaſion to conſider this Deſignation; and tho' this emblematical Diſcovery made to *John* might be by heavenly Angels, yet I never could find Reaſon to go in with theſe learned Men, who are of Opinion, that the Events themſelves repreſented by theſe Viſions, will be brought about by the Miniſtry of glorious Angels; becauſe, whatever Uſe God may make of theſe celeſtial Spirits, in the Government of the World, and even in the Deſtruction of his Enemies; yet I find no Ground from Scripture to believe, that theſe Tranſactions will be ſolely their Work: For we find, when literal *Babylon* was to be brought down, and this Ruin repreſented to *Ezekiel* and *Daniel* in Viſions, under the Emblems of *Angels*, *Cherubims*, and *Living Creatures*; yet in the Accompliſhment of theſe Viſions and Prophecies, God raiſed up Inſtruments from among the Children of Men; which no doubt is the Truth of what theſe *Angels*, *Animals*, &c. were only the Types: Nor is it leſs juſt we underſtand them ſo here; yea, we are ſure ſpiritual *Babylon* ſhall not fall immediately by the Agency of heavenly *Angels*, but that the *Kings of the Earth* ſhall be ſent againſt her, full of Hatred and Wrath, *and ſhall burn her Fleſh with Fire*, Rev. xvii. 16, 17. and therefore I take it to be moſt agreeable to the Chain of this Prophecy, by *Angels* to underſtand the Inſtruments of God's Diſpleaſure he ſhall raiſe up for this very End; and, no doubt, they will be Men ſufficiently fitted for their Work.

2. Their Number, *ſeven.* All the remarkable Steps of Divine Conduct in this Prophecy, have been ranged by *Sevens*, as *Seven Seals*, *ſeven Trumpets*, *ſeven Thunders*; and here *ſeven Angels* with *ſeven Vials.* No doubt it is a definite Number in this, as well as the former Inſtances; yea, it muſt be ſo taken, becauſe, *Chap.* xvi. we have the particular Hiſtory of theſe *ſeven Angels*, as to their Work, which (in my Opinion) puts it beyond all Debate.

3. Their Furniture, *Having the ſeven laſt Plagues.* As for the Word *Plague*, there is but little Difference either as to the Sound or Senſe in all Languages, in *Hebrew*, נֶגַע; in *Greek*, πληγὴ; in *Latine*, *Plaga*; in our Language, *Plague:* Inall theſe it ſignifies an heavy Judgment, and in the *Greek* to *ſtrike* or *pierce through.* Two Things are ſaid of

of them here, 1. There are *ſeven* of them, *i. e.* every Angel had one. 2. They are the *laſt*, which plainly ſays *Antichriſt* had met with ſome Strokes before; but theſe being deſpiſed, God had furniſhed his Meſſengers, here mentioned, with the Inſtruments of their final Deſtruction, and utter Extirpation: Which is from the additional Reaſon more plain, *For in them is filled up* [fulfilled or accompliſhed] *the Wrath of God*; i. e. there will be no more Warnings or Calls to Repentance, no more light Chaſtiſements, or ſmaller Judgments: For theſe will be all unmixed Wrath, and divided into *ſeven Periods*; ſo that the laſt will intirely exterminate the Beaſt and his Image, that they who ſeek them, ſhall not find them. And therefore we have that Voice after the pouring out of the laſt Vial, *Chap.* xvi. 17. *It is done*; which we meet not with in any of the other *ſix Vials*.

2 And I ſaw as it were a Sea of Glaſs, mingled with Fire, and them that had gotten the Victory over the Beaſt, and over his Image, and over his Mark, and over the Number of his Name, ſtand on the Sea of Glaſs, having the Harps of God.

3 And they ſing the Song of Moſes the Servant of God, and the Song of the Lamb, ſaying, Great and marvellous are thy Works, Lord God Almighty, juſt and true are thy Ways, thou King of Saints.

4 Who ſhall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy Name? for thou only art holy: For all Nations ſhall come and worſhip before thee; for thy Judgments are made manifeſt.

This repreſents the Solemnity on the Church's Part, to entertain and ſhew their Senſe of theſe Events. Where we have, in the natural Order of the Words, 1. The Place 2. The Perſons. 3. Their Exerciſe.

I. There is the Place; where, 1. The Thing. 2. A Mixture illuſtrating it.

1. The Thing ſpoken of, *A Sea of Glaſs.* Expoſitors are much divided about the Meaning of this here, as well as *Chap.* iv. 6. Yea, ſome take *Sea* in one Senſe there, and in another here, without giving any Reaſon why they ſhift Sides. I doubt not but the Spirit of God has the ſame Intendment in both Places, which I am ſure is the ſafeſt and moſt comfortable: And ſo, by this *Sea*, we are to underſtand the *meritorious Satisfaction* of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* for the Juſtification of the Elect; the Grounds whereof we advanced in the Place cited.

2. The Mixture, *mingled with Fire.* The Addition of this Clauſe has moved ſeverals to recede from the given Senſe of *Sea*, tho' in my Opinion it ſhould oblige us the more firmly to embrace it here; becauſe by *Fire* I am ready to mean the ſame Thing in this Place, as by *the ſeven Lamps of Fire burning before the Throne*, Chap. iv. 5. which is explain'd in the next Clauſe to be *the ſeven Spirits of God*, i. e. the *Holy Ghoſt*; as I proved on the Place. So that hereby we are to underſtand the efficacious Working of the Spirit of God in Regeneration and Sanctification, which Spirit comes from the Mediator, and thus beſtowed is compared to *Fire*, Mat. iii. 11. *He ſhall baptize you with the Holy Ghoſt, as with Fire.* The Application of this is both eaſy and natural: The Ground on which the Saints ſtand, and rejoice, is their *Juſtification* by *Faith*, and *Sanctification* by the *Spirit*; theſe are ſolid Foundations which were overturned by the Beaſt and his Worſhippers, and therefore they are to fall under the heavy Wrath of God. Nor are we to think from this, that Faith and Holineſs are mixed in *Juſtification*; for the Emblem is not ſpeaking of *Juſtification*, but of Perſons juſtified, in whom both Faith and Holineſs muſt be found. Which brings to the

II. The Perſons that ſtand on this Sea: Where, 1. Their Character. 2. Their Poſture.

1. Their Character; which is in one Word, they are *Conquerors.* Here we have ſeveral Things they are ſaid to overcome, all which we explained at great Length on Chap. xiii. This, I think, does not comprehend only the 144000 were with the Lamb on Mount *Zion*, and that other numberleſs Number the Apoſtle heard, Chap. xiv. 2. who were never debauched with the Errors of the *Beaſt* or his *Image*; but alſo theſe who, by the Miniſtry of three Angels, Chap. xiv. from *v.* 6. were brought off from them; for both theſe may be ſaid to overcome: The One that would never buy or ſell with them, the other that had left that damnable Communion, and joined themſelves to the Lamb. All theſe Terms we explained, *Chap.* xiii. Some, becauſe they cannot get theſe three mentioned here, *the Beaſts, their Mark*, and *Number*, reconciled with theſe Senſes

they were pleaſed to put upon them, run immediately to Heaven with theſe Perſons, where they are ſure none can follow them in this Life. It ſeems to be hard, we ſhall never meet with a Stroke upon God's Enemies, but inſtantly that muſt be the laſt Judgment; nor the Church have a breathing Time, but preſently a State of Glory is to be fixed on it: As if the Bulk of this Prophecy were to advertiſe us of a future State, tho', by the Intendment of it, it mainly reſpects the *Militant* State of the Church: But this is the Evil of Schemes. But grant theſe Quiriſters were in Heaven at the Diſplay of the Emblem, which, as far as I know, none will refuſe; will there be nothing on Earth to correſpond, when the Events ſhall come to paſs? which I am ſure none can deny.

2. Their Poſture, *They ſtood upon the Sea of Glaſs, with Harps.* Here, that they *ſtood*, ſhews their Confidence in the *Righteouſneſs* of Chriſt, as ſufficient for all their Exigencies; as alſo their Courage and Zeal. The Furniture is the ſame with what we had, Chap. xiv. 2. Only here theſe Harps are called the *Harps of God*, becauſe they employed them for his Honour, that now they were brought into a State of Inlargement.

III. The Exerciſe of theſe Perſons, which no doubt is of both Hand and Tongue; for, tho' it be not ſaid they employed their Harps, *v.* 2. yet to what Purpoſe would they have them, if they were not to uſe them? Sure, they were not now, when victorious, to hang them upon the Willows; but we are ſure, Chap. xiv. *They harped with their Harps.* Again, their *Tongues* were employed in *Singing*, of which we alſo heard before, *Chap.* v. 9. and *Chap.* xiv. 3. and ſo we paſs theſe Acts; yet we would a little view the Song itſelf, which will be found to differ in ſome Things from the other Songs we have met with in this Prophecy. We ſhall conſider, 1. The general Character of their Song. 2. The ſeveral Parts thereof.

1. In general, we have two Characters given of this Song of theirs;

(1.) It is called *the Song of* Moſes *the Servant of God.* There are two famous Songs by *Moſes*, one when the Lord brought the *Iſraelites* through the *Red-ſea*, Exod. xv. The other after they were brought through the *Wilderneſs*, Deut. xxxii. and were within Sight of the promiſed Land. But, 'tis evident, neither of theſe are in the Terms of what we have afterwards ſubjoined as the Matter of their Song; and therefore we are not to take this ſtrictly, as if they had the very Words of either of theſe Songs: But the Meaning is, as *Moſes* did nick the Opportunities and Occaſions of Thankſgiving, ſo will theſe do, and not fail to mention the Wonders of God's *Mercy* to his People, and *Juſtice* upon their Enemies. Yea, we may look on *Moſes*'s Songs, and the Occaſions of them, as Figures and Types of what will be at that Time; for then the full Time of the Reign of *Antichriſt* will be come, and the End of all the *Church's Labours.* And indeed, there will appear a notable Congruity betwixt the State of the *Iſraelites*, after they paſſed the *Red-ſea*, and had afterwards marched thorow an howling Wilderneſs, and the State of the Chriſtian Church at this Period, when ſhe ſhall have waded thorow the Red-ſea of Perſecution, and had a long March thorow their Wilderneſs-State, One thouſand two hundred and ſixty Years Travel; and therefore, well may this be called *the Song of* Moſes.

(2.) It is called *the Song of the Lamb.* It will be hard to deſign their Song from the *Lamb*, in the ſame Senſe as from *Moſes*; ſeeing we nowhere read that ever Chriſt ſung, except a little before his Death, when he inſtitute the Supper; then it is ſaid, *Mark* xiv. 26. *They ſung a Hymn.* At another Occaſion indeed we read, *Matth.* xi. 25. that *He rejoiced in Spirit, and ſaid, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth,* &c. If it was true, that our Lord and his Diſciples ſung the cxlv. *Pſalm* that Night wherein he was betrayed (as I ſee not how any Man can affirm or deny) we may find ſomething in this Song very agreeable thereto: For this begins with the 17 Verſe of that. However, we are under no Neceſſity to ſtick ſo cloſs to the Words: For by *Song of the Lamb*, we may underſtand a Song in Praiſe or Commendation of the *Lamb*, which in this Caſe is evident; for he is *King of Saints.*

2. The Particulars of this Song conſiſt, 1. Of a ſolemn Declaration, *v.* 3. And, 2. A rapturous Exclamation and Excitation, *v.* 4.

(1.) We have a *Declaration* from thankful Hearts, *v.* 3. where we find but a very inconſiderable Difference betwixt this and *Pſalm* cxlv. 17. only that this is introduced with more Solemnity. Here we find the Declaration terminate, 1. In the Works of God; *Great and marvellous are thy Works, Lord God Almighty.* The Pſalmiſt hath ſomething to this Purpoſe, *Pſal.* cxxxix. 14. *Marvelous are thy Works.* And again, *Pſal.* cxi. 2. *The Works of the Lord are great.* And again we find the ſame Character, *Pſal.* cxxxix. 14. *Marvellous are thy Works.* This ſeems to point at his Works of *Mercy* towards his own, and to his Works of *Juſtice* towards his Enemies. 2. It terminates in his Ways, *Juſt and true are thy Ways*; this ſeems to be from the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* cxlv. 17.

17. *The Lord is righteous in all his Ways.* Tho' the Works and Ways of God in Scripture do many a Time ſignify the ſame Thing; yet it ſeems reaſonable to diſtinguiſh them here, eſpecially that they are advanced with ſo much Solemnity: And ſo, by *Works*, we may underſtand the Productions of God; and, by *Ways*, the Method of his Operation: This caſts up from their ſeveral Properties; for the Properties of the Works are *great* and *marvellous*, and the Properties of the Ways are *juſt* and *true*: All which would allow a large Amplification.

(2.) There is an *upſtirring* and *rapturous Exclamation*, v. 4. where we have, 1. An Interrogation, *Who ſhall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy Name?* Which is upon the Matter what the Prophet advances, *Jer.* x. 7. *Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations?* By *Fear*, we are to underſtand the Worſhip of God according to his own Will: And by *glorifying him*, to direct all we do to his Honour. That it is here brought in by a Queſtion, is to engage us to conſider how prodigious a Sin it is, to neglect this great Piece of our Duty, and to point at the terrible Judgments that will overtake theſe that do otherwiſe. This Expoſtulation is inforced by ſeveral Arguments, as, 1. From the Holineſs of God, *For thou only art holy*; which declares the Nature of this Work: It will be holy in all its Parts. Yea, their pleading upon this Topick ſays plainly, That the *Holineſs* of God is engaged in their Quarrel, conſidering the oppoſite Natures of the Church and her Enemies. 2. From the Increaſe of *Chriſt's Kingdom*, that will begin to take Place at that Time, *For all Nations ſhall come and worſhip before thee.* This is an Argument founded upon the Faithfulneſs of God, which had ſtipulate there ſhould be an univerſal Gathering to him of *all Nations*; as we find particularly enſured to the Church, *Iſa.* lxvi. 23. *All Fleſh ſhall come to worſhip before me, ſaith the Lord.* 3. From the Manifeſtations of the Judgments of God; *For thy Judgments are made manifeſt*, i. e. all the former Diſcoveries thereof were obſcure in Compariſon of what will then fall out.

5 And after that I looked, and behold, the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Teſtimony in Heaven was opened.

6 And the ſeven Angels came out of the Temple, having the ſeven Plagues, clothed in pure and white Linen, and having their Breaſts girded with golden Girdles.

7 And one of the four Beaſts gave unto the ſeven Angels, ſeven golden Vials full of the Wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

8 And the Temple was filled with Smoke from the Glory of God, and from his Power; and no Man was able to enter into the Temple, till the ſeven Plagues of the ſeven Angels were fulfilled.

This is an Enlargement on the Contents of *v.* 1. where we have, (1.) The Opening of the Temple, *v.* 5. (2.) The Appearance of theſe ſeven Angels, *v.* 6. (3.) How they were provided for their preſent Work, *v.* 7. (4.) An Emblem of God's glorious Preſence in the Temple, *v.* 8.

I. We have the Opening of the Temple, *v.* 5. which was at Length explained, Chap. xi. 19. Nor do I ſee how any other Senſe can obtain here. I own the Conſtruction differs, which has moved ſome Expoſitors to alter the Meaning: Here it reads, *The Temple of the Tabernacle of the Teſtimony in Heaven*; Whereas, Chap. xi. 19. *The Temple of God was opened in Heaven, and there was ſeen in his Temple the Ark of his Teſtament.* Where it is plain, that beſides the Opening of the Temple, which always happened when there was a Reformation from Idolatry, as it is recorded, 2 *Chron.* xxix. 3. *The Temple was opened in the firſt Month of* Hezekiah, *in order to clean the Houſe, and ſet up the Worſhip of God.* But, beſides this, *The Ark of the Teſtimony was ſeen*; which we never read was diſcovered at ſuch Times: And therefore I gave as the full Senſe of theſe Words, the Reduction of the *Jews* upon the Fall of *Antichriſt*, which, according to that Order, Chap. xi. did follow the *In-bringing* of the *Nations*, and preceed the pouring out of the *Vials*, as it does here: Yet, in both Places, it ſeems plain the *Beaſt* and his *Image* were to meet with a heavy Stroke; For, Chap. xi. 18. we read, *The Time was come when God ſhould deſtroy them that deſtroy the Earth.* And in this Place it comes in upon the Back of the *Harveſt* and *Vintage*; and ſo the Parts of this Prophecy exactly anſwer one another, as Face does to Face in a Glaſs. But we would a little examine ſome diſcordant Opinions, which we ſhall do very ſhortly.

1. Some, by *the Opening of the Tabernacle*, &c. underſtand the Diſcovering of the *eternal Counſels of God*. If by this they mean, that this Emergent will accompliſh what God had from all Eternity determined concerning his ancient People the *Jews*, and fulfilled all the Prophecies concerning them, then there is no Plea; we are agreed. But what they give as the Explication of this Senſe, carries it quite off this Footing; for they ſeem to ſay there will be another *Revelation* of the Will of God, than what we have yet met with. This is a Poſition will be very hard to prove; for it would appear the whole Will of God is already manifeſted in the Scriptures, tho' it is not the Happineſs of every one to underſtand it. Beſides, ſuch Thoughts as theſe are of dangerous Conſequence, and rub hard upon the Perfection of the *Word of God*.

2. Others, by *this Opening*, underſtand a gracious Return to the Prayers of the Saints againſt *Antichriſt*: For, ſay they, the *Temple* was opened when the High Prieſt went in to get God's Anſwer to the Peoples Prayers. We may well allow this to hold for ſo far, that at this Time God will ſhew he has not been regardleſs of his Peoples Suits; for this will be a final Anſwer: Yet how to make this the whole of the Text, I ſee not; it is too low: And beſides, we found theſe Prayers under the fifth Seal got a preſent Anſwer long before this Time.

3. Others ſay, All that is meant here is barely this, The *Temple* was opened, that the ſeven Angels might go out of the ſame with the more Solemnity. This is a very *ſmooth*, yet *dark* Meaning, eſpecially if we knit together their Interpretation of the Term of the Text; for by *Temple* they mean Heaven, and by theſe *Angels* heavenly *Spirits*. Now, what will the Amount of all this be? *Heaven was opened to make Way for theſe Angels*. Others again by *Heaven* mean the *militant Church*, and yet make the *Angels* to be *heavenly*; but this tells worſe. But if theſe Angels did repreſent ſome earthly Inſtruments, as we will afterwards find, then the Opening of the Temple will be no more but the Concurrence of the Church with them, which is not denied: And yet it is to ſtint the Senſe, which otherwiſe will be more full, when we underſtand it of the Converſion of the *Jews*, when both the *Jewiſh* and *Gentile* Church will be *one Stick in the Hand of the Lord*. I own, there is a Difficulty that meets this, while it is ſaid in the following Verſe, that *the Angels came out of the Temple*: So that, whatever be the Senſe of *Temple*, we muſt allow theſe Angels to come out of it; and this is more eaſily propoſed than ſolved: Yet I cannot ſay, it is ſo great, that we ſhould renounce the Senſe given of Verſe 5. It might be ſaid, that *Temple* here, *v.* 5. is to be taken in the ſame Senſe as Chap. xi. 19. and *Temple*, *v.* 6. in the ſame Meaning we advanced, Chap. xiv. in ſeveral Places: And there is the more Room for this, that the Phraſes in the 5th and 6th Verſes differ much from other. But yet to allow the Temple in both theſe Verſes to have the ſame Senſe, all that I ſee can follow is, that theſe Angels ſhall come from among the converted *Jews*; which tho' I do not affirm, yet I think there is no Abſurdity in it: But if we allow *Temple* in the 6th Verſe, to comprehend both the *Jewiſh* and *Gentile* Church, the Matter is plain.

As for the extraordinary Conſtruction in the Text, I rather chooſe to leave it as it is, than flee to Tropes and Figures, to wreſt from it what the Spirit of God never meant; as we find ſome who would have the Temple and Tabernacle ſignify the ſame Thing, by the conjuring Art of *genitivus ſpeciei*. In general, then, by theſe three Words we may underſtand the whole Import and Signification of the *Jewiſh* OEconomy, then truly brought to Light, when that *Nation* ſhall own the one and only *Mediator*: But this we inſiſted on, Chap. xi. 19.

II. We have the Appearance of the *ſeven Angels*, v. 6. To be ſure theſe are the ſame mentioned, *v.* 1. both becauſe the *ſeven Angels*, v. 1. are ſaid to have the *ſeven laſt Plagues*, after which none will follow; and here again the *Particle* οἱ, *theſe*, muſt muſt reſpect them that were before mentioned. They are ſaid to come from the *Temple*, of which we ſaid enough before at ſeveral Times. Here all I note upon it is, Theſe Executioners of the Will of God will belong to the Church; which will further appear, when we conſider the two Branches of their Apparel.

1. Their upper Garment, *clothed in pure and white Linen*. This ſome think to be with Alluſion to the *Prieſts* Garments under the *Law*: But this is not neceſſary to ſuppoſe; for the *Linen* that the *High Prieſt* wore, was typical of the *Holineſs* of *Chriſt*; and what Linen was worn by others, was not only for this End, but to mind them how holy they ſhould be. And that now, under the Goſpel, all theſe ceremonial Veſts are laid aſide; It ſeems reaſonable we ſhould underſtand theſe Veſtments, to denote their Heart and Converſation Purity, and to have the ſame Import with the *white Raiment* promiſed the Overcomers in the Church of *Sardis*, at leaſt as far as it is attainable on this Side of Heaven. They will then be holy Perſons God will imploy in this Work.

2. Their

2. Their Breaſt-plates or Girdles, *Having their Breaſts girded with golden Girdles.* Some think this alſo to have Alluſion to the High Prieſt's Breaſt-plates; but we had this ſame Clauſe, *Chap.* i. 13. as a Part of Chriſt's Furniture and Royal Attire, and there explained it. Here it is aſcribed to mere Creatures, yet to aſſure us they will be honoured with a Ray of Chriſt's *Power*; and ſo, as the Raiment declared their Holineſs, this ſeems to be aſcribed to them as a Mark of *Diſtinction*, and to aſſure us they will be no mean Perſons, but will be very great: But, what Families or Kingdoms they will come from, as it is not ſaid in the Text, ſo it would be great Raſhneſs for any to determine.

III. How they were provided for their Work: Where, 1. What Veſſels they got. 2. Whence they had them. 3. What was in them.

1. What were theſe Veſſels? *Seven golden Vials*, i. e. one for each *Angel*. Further, we would notice the Nature of theſe Veſſels, and then the Matter of them.

(1.) The Nature of theſe Veſſels, called *Vials*, or, as ſome incline to ſpell it nearer the *Greek*, *Phials*. There is no ſmall Sputter amongſt the Learned about the Shape of them: Some would have them narrow at the Mouth and wide at the Bottom, in Shape of a Bottle or Sand-glaſs, which voids itſelf very ſlowly; but what Reaſon they have for this, is more than I can find: For, in all *Dictionaries*, the Word ſignifies a Drinking-cup. It is true, we find it taken for ſomething elſe in this ſame *Prophecy*, Chap. v. 8. where it ſeems to ſignify *Cenſers*; becauſe *the Elders had Vials filled with ſweet Odours* or *Frankincenſe*. However, this makes it plain, whatever the Shape of them be, they are wider at the Mouth than the Bottom, at leaſt as wide, elſe they had been unfit for that Uſe. Beſides, theſe Vials are not deſigned to meaſure Time, but to diſpenſe Wrath, which in Scripture is often repreſented as in a Cup, out of which the Wicked are to drink, Chap. xiv. 10. tho' there be there another Word for Cup than Vial. It is true, Chap. xvi. we read, not of *Drinking*, but of *Pouring*; which I believe has betrayed the learned *Jurieu* to this Miſtake. However, I ſhall not ſtiffly contend about any Shape, ſo that it be allowed of ſuch a Figure as fits it for diſcharging ſuddenly its Contents; as the Word in the next Chapter ſeems to require. But indeed this is the great Matter of the Debate; for they contend every *Phial* requires a very long Time to be emptied, which I can find no Reaſon to go in with: Nay, I am ſure, when it comes to this laſt Pale of Judgments againſt *Antichriſt*, there will be but little Time conſumed by all the *Vials*; and therefore it is ſaid, Chap. xviii. 10. *In one Hour is* Babylon's *Judgment come.* Which to me ſeems to declare, her Plagues will be without Intermiſſion: But of this more afterwards. Yet ſtill we are at a Loſs what to underſtand by *Vials*, be their Shape what it will; Nor do I obſerve any of the Learned touch this, which I am ready to aſcribe to the Heat of their Diſpute about the Figure of theſe Veſſels, that made them forget it. We find, *Rom.* ix. 22. that *Veſſels of Wrath* are mentioned frequently in a *paſſive* Senſe, which I cannot think is to be meant here, elſe they would not be called *golden*: We are therefore to take it in an *active* Senſe, and ſo they are ſaid to diſcharge the Wrath that is in them; and then, by theſe we may mean the Armies, which theſe great Men, deſigned *Angels*, are to command.

(2.) The Matter of theſe Vials, *of Gold*; which ſhews their Excellency, and tells, they will be true Chriſtians, who are many a Time called *Gold* in Scripture, and is a Deſignation given to the whole Church, while ſhe is called a *golden Candleſtick*, Chap. i. 12. They will then fight for their *God*, their *Faith*, and their *Conſcience*: No Ambition nor Covetouſneſs will be the Spring of their Activity; which, alas! preponderates many a Time with the Soldiers of our Day.

2. Whence they had them? *One of the four living Creatures gave them.* We gave the Senſe of the *four Beaſts*, Chap. iv. 6. and ſhewed them to be Emblems of Goſpel-Miniſters. As for the Word, ἑν, *one*, I am very eaſy whether it be taken indifferently for any one of theſe living Creatures, or for the firſt in Order, for which ſome ſtrenuouſly contend; for all that can follow from this ſecond Opinion, is, that the Miniſtry God will raiſe up at that Time, will be a very ſtout and undaunton'd Sett of Men, who ſeem very fit for ſuch a Work: Yet any of them will anſwer the Deſign. And whichever of them it proves, they will have ſufficient Warrant to excite theſe *Angels* to go about their Buſineſs, and from the Scriptures of Truth to convince theſe Kings or great Men, that it is Duty to contribute their utmoſt Endeavours to bring down the *Beaſt* and his *Image*. It is not the firſt Time that the Armies of the Lord of Hoſts have been animated by his Servants of the Miniſtry, and that with great Succeſs: So, when *Jeroboam* had beſet *Jeruſalem* behind and before, it is ſaid, 2 *Chron.* xiii. 15. *The Prieſts ſounded with the Trumpets, and the Men of* Judah *ſhouted*; upon which followed a moſt remarkable Victory. We find alſo the Lord has at Times raiſed up a notable

Miniſtry for this Purpoſe, as in the Caſe of *Jeremiah*, Jer. i. 10. *I have ſet thee over the Nations, to root out, and to pull down.*

3. What is in them? They are *full of the Wrath of God.* Here then no Mixture of Mercy. We explain'd the Phraſe, Chap. xiv. 10. As for the Character here given, God *who liveth for ever and ever*, we had it, Chap. iv. 9. Chap. v. 14. & Chap. x. 6. This no doubt is to accent the Wrath, and ſtir up the Executioners to do for God, and not for themſelves; they muſt neither add their own Vengeance to the *Wrath of God*, nor mix their Mercy with his Indignation. We ſee the Danger of this in *Saul*, whom *Samuel* in the Name of God commanded, 1 *Sam.* xv. 3. *Now go and ſmite* Amalek, *and utterly deſtroy all that they have*, &c. Which becauſe *Saul* diſobeyed, he is ſeverely rebuked, *v.* 11. *It repented the Lord that he made* Saul *King.* We have another Inſtance to the ſame Purpoſe by *Jeremiah*, Chap. xlviii. 10. *Curſed be he that doth the Work of the Lord deceitfully; curſed be he that keepeth back his Sword from Blood.*

IV. There is an Emblem of God's glorious Preſence in the Temple, *v.* 8. Where, 1. The Emblem of his Glory. 2. The Effect of it.

1. The Emblem of his Glory, *The Temple was filled with Smoke from the Glory of God, and from his Power.* I find Expoſitors at a Loſs here, who have forgot to diſtinguiſh betwixt *Smoke* and a *Cloud*, which, tho' very like other, are vaſtly different in Scripture: For tho' many a Time I find the gracious Preſence of God, under the Emblem of a Cloud; yet, if any can find it under that of Smoke, I want to know the Inſtances, for I have not been able to find any: But, wherever we read of *Smoke* as proceeding from God, ſtill it is an Indication of Wrath; a notable Inſtance we have in *Iſaiah*, Chap. vi. 4, 9, &c. *The whole Houſe was filled with Smoke*: Which we ſee was a Sign of God's Diſpleaſure afterwards. We read again of Smoke by the Pſalmiſts, *Pſal.* xviii. 8, 14. *There went up a Smoke out of his Noſtrils, and he ſent forth his Arrows, and ſcattered them.* And, wherever we read of Smoke, we find God diſpleaſed: While it is ſaid, *The Temple was filled with Smoke*; I take the Senſe of it to be, God will then raiſe in the Minds of all his Church, an Indignation againſt the *Beaſt* and his *Image.* It is ſaid to flow *from his Glory and Power*, i. e. from the *Glory* of his *Juſtice*, and his *Power* imployed in the Diſcovery thereof; yea, and the *Glory* of his *Grace* in exciting theſe Inſtruments of his Indignation to proſecute his Will.

2. The Effect of this, *And no Man was able to enter into the Temple, till the ſeven Plagues of the ſeven Angels were fulfilled.* It were hard to underſtand this ſo, as none ſhould be joined to the Church all the while the Vials are pouring out; and to ſay not one of the Partiſans of the Beaſt ſhould have this Privilege, is what was their Caſe before. This ſeems to be a Phraſe borrowed from the *Law* of *Moſes*, and ſo, by entring into the Temple, is to be underſtood of Prayer: So, *Numb.* iv. 23. *All that enter in to perform the Service. David* ſpeaks of Prayer in theſe Terms, *Pſal.* v. 7. *I will come into thy Houſe in the Multitude of thy Mercies, and in thy Fear will I worſhip towards thy holy Temple.* The like Expreſſion we have of *Zacharias*, Luke i. 9. *He went in to the Temple with Incenſe.* This Part of the Service was properly *Interceſſory*: And here, while it is ſaid, *None was able to go in*; The Meaning is, None might interceed or plead with God in Behalf of the *Beaſt* and his *Image.* To extend it further, would be prophane: And this is no more, than what we meet with ſeveral Times in Scripture, particularly, *Jer.* vii. 17. *Pray thou not for this People, neither lift up Cry or Prayer for them, neither make Interceſſion to me, for I will not hear.* We have the ſame in a more prophetick Strain, *Lam.* iii. 44. *Thou haſt covered thyſelf with a Cloud, that our Prayers cannot paſs through.* As for the limited Time in the following Expreſſion, *Till the ſeven Plagues of the ſeven Angels were fulfilled*; It is properly no Reſtriction at all, but leaves the firſt Part as ample as if this were not added; yea, it ſeems to increaſe the abſolute Import of it, as we ſee it in another Place, *Pſal.* cx. 1. *Sit thou at my Right-hand, until I make thy Foes thy Footſtool.* Which does not ſay he was to ſit no longer there; nay, he was to be ſurer ſeated in his Throne, when his Enemies were conquered, than before, if it be poſſible: And ſo the Senſe of it is, God will then be perfectly inexorable.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

WE had the introductory Solemnities to the ſeventh Trumpet, which is to finiſh the Myſtery of God, Chap. x. 7. It is called the third Wo, Chap. xi. 14. not becauſe there is nothing but Wo to fall out in it; for it is evident from the Cloſe of Chap. xi. and a great Part of Chap. xv. that it will be a very glorious Time to the Church: But indeed it will be all Wo unto the Beaſt and his Image. This Trumpet has two notable Branches, one of *Judgment* upon *Antichriſt*, and another of *Mercy* to the Church. The firſt of theſe we have in this Chapter, and illuſtrate by ſeveral other explicatory Viſions, to the Cloſe of Chap. xix. The ſecond, *viz.* the happy State of the Church, we have, Chap. xx. *&c.*

The ireful Conſequents of the ſounding of the ſeventh Trumpet are repreſented to us in this Chapter, where we have, 1. The Orders given to the ſeven Angels, we heard of before, *v.* 1. 2. The Execution of them in the reſt.

1 AND I heard a great Voice out of the Temple, ſaying to the ſeven Angels, Go your Ways, and pour out the Vials of the Wrath of God upon the Earth.

Where we have, 1. The Commander. 2. The Commands.

1. The Commander; *I heard a great Voice out of the Temple, ſaying to the ſeven Angels.* We have heard the Senſe of all theſe Words before, and they ſeem to be much a-kin to theſe we have, Chap. xi. 12. only there it is ſaid to be from *Heaven*, and here out of the *Temple*, which will not make great Odds. It is indeed much diſputed, who ſhould be the Speaker: Some ſay, The Saints in their Prayers; but it is very plain, this is a Word of Command, not of Supplication; beſides, How can we think the Church would pray to *Angels*? Others again think it is the Voice of the *Church*, calling and rouzing theſe repreſented by *Angels*, to the Work unto which they were deſtin'd. Others take it to be the Voice of God. We may join theſe two, and then I reckon we will have the full Senſe of it: No Doubt but at that Time there will be a full and clear Call, and that principally from God in the Scriptures of Truth, which not only the Miniſtry, but even private Chriſtians, will know.

2. The Commands given theſe Angels, they are to execute the Will of God againſt the Earth; where we are ſure all the *ſeven* are to empty their *Vials*: Yet it is very evident, that only one of them pouted out his *Vial* upon the *Earth*; Nor may we think the other Six diſobeyed the Orders given: And therefore we muſt take this Word, *Earth*, *v.* 1. to be a General comprehending all the ſeven after-mentioned; and then there is a much Difference betwixt *Earth* here, and *Earth*, v. 2. as is betwixt the *Whole* and a *Part*: For *Earth* here muſt take in its Comprehenſion not only *Earth* mentioned, *v.* 2. but alſo the *Sea* mentioned, *v.* 3, &c. So that here it is not oppoſed to Sea, as afterwards, in the Execution; but to *Heaven*, the Emblem of the Church: And ſo by *Earth* we are to underſtand the *Beaſt*, his *Image*, and their *Worſhippers*. The Commands given theſe Angels, are two,

(1.) *Go your Ways.* This is a Part of the Orders given at once to all the ſeven Angels, and is a Recommendation to Diligence and Expedition. So that if they do not all empty their *Vials* at once, it ſeems very probable there will be but a ſhort Interval betwixt them; and therefore it is ſaid, *Babylon*'s Ruin comes in one Day, or in one Hour, Chap. xviii. 10. This mars all *Jurieu*'s Sand-glaſſes.

(2.) *Pour out the Vials of the Wrath of God upon the Earth.* *To pour out*, ſignifies to void any Thing with Violence, and ſuddenly; thus we have the Word uſed, *Rom.* iii. 15. *Their Feet are ſwift to ſhed* [pour out] *Blood.* 'Tis here the Execution of Juſtice, and not a Denunciation of Judgments, which are ordered to be done with Diſpatch, and not leiſurely, and by ſlow Degrees, as ſome contend.

The Execution of theſe Orders we have in the reſt of the Chapter. As I noted before, there is a very great Affinity betwixt the Objects ſpoken of in the *Trumpets*, and in the *Vials*; which has moved ſome to think, that the *Trumpets* and *Vials* are different Repreſentations of the ſame Event: But, from what we have ſaid, the *ſeven Vials* are contained in the *ſeventh Trumpet*, and therefore they muſt be diverſe Events from what is under the *Trumpets*. Yet I cannot go in with theſe who ſay, that *Antichriſt* roſe under the Trumpets, and will fall under the Vials; for I proved, 1. That the *ſeven Trumpets* are contained in the *ſixth Seal*: Whereas *Antichriſt* was revealed under the *ſecond*, *third*, and *fourth Seals*, and was at his Height in the Beginning of the *ſixth Seal*;

for the End of it is not yet come. 2. I proved that all the *ſix Trumpets* are really Judgments upon *Antichriſt*: But yet there ſeems to be this Difference betwixt the *Trumpets* and the *Vials*, that the *Trumpets* for the moſt Part are ſpiritual Plagues, whereas theſe in the *Vials* are exterminating and deſtructive. It will be neceſſary that we collate the Trumpets with the Vials as we go along, which will give Light.

I ſhall only further notice by Way of Introduction, that theſe *Vials* are advanced in ſuch Terms, as give Ground to believe the *Spirit of God* is alluding to the *Plagues* upon *Egypt*; But as thoſe were *hiſtorical*, theſe are *prophetical*: And therefore I preſume he would be an unlucky Expoſitor, who would fiſh the Meaning of thoſe from theſe, further than this General, As God did many Ways plague literal *Egypt*, before he drown'd them in the *Red Sea*; ſo there will ſeveral Steps of God's Wrath uſher in the final Deſtruction of ſpiritual *Egypt*, which will be as certain, as either that of *Egypt* or *Babylon*.

VIAL I.

2 And the firſt went, and poured out his Vial upon the Earth; and there fell a noiſom and grievous Sore upon the Men which had the Mark of the Beaſt, and upon them which worſhipped his Image.

IN this we have the Emblem of the Judgment, and the Effect.

I. The Emblem, where, 1. The Agent. 2. The Action. 3. The Object.

1. The *Agent*, the *firſt Angel*; which muſt neceſſarily be underſtood, becauſe expreſt in all the reſt; and they are called ſeven Angels, *v.* 1. Tho' we know not who theſe Angels are, we are ſure they are all ranged by God, and that they will obſerve carefully his Orders, tho' not diſtinguiſhed to us.

2. His *Action*, which is twofold, according to the Command, *v.* 1. *He went, and poured out*: So that his Obedience exactly anſwers his Orders. 'Tis not to be thought this *Angel* was at any greater Diſtance from his Province, than the other ſix, of whom it is not ſaid, *They went*: But this Motion of his, muſt alſo be underſtood of the reſt.

3. The *Object*, *the Earth*; where it is not to be taken in that Senſe as in *v.* 1. but will do better to uſe it as we did under the firſt Trumpet, for *Aſia*, or the Eaſtern Part of the World: If this hold, then the firſt of theſe *Plagues* will hit the *Mahometan* Territories, and ſo not miſs a Multitude of Papiſts ſcattered up and down thorow the ſame.

II. The Effect, in the reſt of the Verſe; where, 1. The Evil. 2. Whom it affects.

1. The *Evil* that reſulted from the pouring out of the Vial, *There fell a noiſom and grievous Sore*; for the Word *fell* ſignifies no more but that it *came from*, or was produced by the *Vial* poured out. As for the Thing itſelf, it ſeems plainly to allude to one of the *Plagues* of *Egypt*, Exod. ix. 9. *In all the Land of* Egypt *ſhall be Boils, breaking forth with Blains upon Man.* We find thisalſo threatned upon the Diſobedient, *Deut.* xxviii. 35. *The Lord ſhall ſmite thee in the Knees, and in the Legs, with a ſore Botch which cannot be healed, from the Sole of thy Foot to the Top of thy Head.* But then, how to apply this to a prophetick Paſſage, is not ſo eaſy; eſpecially that we find Expreſſions a-kin to theſe in the Prophets, which muſt be otherwiſe underſtood, *Iſa.* i. 6. *From the Sole of the Foot, to the Crown of the Head, there is no Soundneſs in it; but Wounds, and Bruiſes, and putrifying Sores.* Which we have in plain Language in the next Verſe, *Your Country ſhall be deſolate, your Cities are burnt up with Fire; your Land, Strangers devour it in your Preſence, and it is deſolate and overthrown by Strangers.* This is a very ſafe Senſe; unleſs, with ſome, we would underſtand it of the *Peſt*: But we would a little look into the Words uſed here to expreſs this Evil, 1. The general and figurative Deſignation thereof, ἕλκος, which properly ſignifies a *Boil*. This, in the ſtricteſt Notion of it, is not an univerſal Malady, tho' there may be ſeverals of them on one Perſon: It ſignifies the Collection of vitious Humours to one Part; ſo that ſome, at leaſt the adjacent Parts, muſt be free. This alſo is the Scripture-Senſe of it; for it is ſaid of *Lazarus*, Luke xvi. 21. *The Dogs licked his Sores*, or Boils. Theſe, for ordinary, are moſt uneaſy, but more ſo, if they be *Carbuncles*, or Peſt-Boils, which ſome think eſpecially alluded to here. 2. We have the *Adjuncts* of theſe Sores, which are two, κακὸν, *evil*: But properly it ſignifies a ſlothful or lazy Indiſpoſition; παρὰ τὸ χαζέιν. We have the Authority of our Lord to juſtify this, *Mat.* xxiv. 48. *If that evil Servant*, &c. Where, from the Context, 'tis plain, he was a ſluggiſh and idle Servant: And ſo theMeaning will be, Theſe on whom this Plague ſhall fall, will be rendered

dred unactive. This is commonly the Case of these against whom God contends, *Ezek.* xxx. 22. *Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, I am against* Pharaoh *King of* Egypt, *and I will break his Arms, and will cause the Sword to fall out of his Hand*: Their Hearts will be as the Hearts of Women in the Day of their Distress. The next *Adjunct* is πονηρον; this signifies a dolorous Evil, which has much Pain going along with it. It comes from πονος, which signifies Pain, as *v.* 10. Our Lord useth this Word, to express the Trouble of Reproach or Slander, *Mat.* v. 11. *When they shall say all Manner of Evil against you.* This, then, seems to be a most exquisite Stroke; these, on whom it falls, will be enfeebled and pained, and thereby be incapable to do for themselves, what otherwise might be expected.

2. These whom it will affect, *The Men which had the Mark of the Beast, and that worshipped his Image.* These are explain'd, Chap. xiii. We may then conclude, this *Plague* will not hit the *Beast* or his *Image* immediately, but yet will weaken both, when it catches hold of a great Multitude of their Followers. God will begin at the Outworks of these impious Powers, and will carry the Strokes nearer and nearer, till he reach the very Vitals.

If we compare this with the first *Trumpet*, we will find they do not agree much, except in the Object; the Plague is in both, upon the Earth: And probably, when the first Trumpet sounds, there may be more reasonable Conjectures made about this Vial, because the Persons are the same. As for the Plagues themselves, they seem to differ more in the Expression, than in the Signification; yet I would not have it thought they are the same. It is indisputable, we are from the Threed of the Prophecy to allow two notable Differences, 1. Of Time: The *Trumpets* will preceed the *Vials*, but how long, I have found no Reason to determine; but, from a complex View of the Whole, I am ready to think, the Distance of Time will not be near so long as some imagine. 2. Of Degree: The *Vial* will be much heavier than the Effect of the *Trumpet*, yet the Trumpet is an Earnest of the *Vial*. These two Differences must be carried along thorow all the *Vials*.

VIAL II.

3 And the second Angel poured out his Vial upon the Sea, and it became as the Blood of a dead Man; and every living Soul died in the Sea.

IN this we only notice these Things did not occur in the first Vial; as, 1. The Object. 2. The Effect. 3. The Consequent.

1. The *Object* upon which this Vial was poured out, *the Sea*: Where it seems plain, we are not to take *Sea* in that Sense we had it, Chap. xv. 2. for here it is opposed to *Earth*. Some, by *Sea*, understand the troubled State of a Kingdom, as by *Earth* a quiet and settled Condition: Because *Daniel* calls that *Earth* in one Verse, which he had called *Sea* in another. But, seeing by *Earth* we understood *Asia* in the second Verse, it seems equal we should by *Sea* understand the Western Part of the World, or *Europe*, which I shewed on Chap. x. not to want a probable Ground; but, that by *Sea* we should mean Worship, or Profession, or Principles, true or false, has no Authority to support it, but what is very indirect, and far-fetched.

2. The Effect of the *Vial* upon the *Sea, and it became as the Blood of a dead Man.* Where I must remark some Difference betwixt the Original and our Translation; for the exact Reading of the Words is, *And it* [the Sea] *became Blood as of a dead Man*; where is a manifest Allusion to the first Plague brought upon the Land of *Egypt*, Exod. vii. 17. *I will smite with the Rod that is in mine Hand upon the Waters which are in the River, and they shall be turned to Blood.* But, as I shewed in the other Vial, it seems not fair to take the literal Meaning of an History, and thereby unriddle the Purport of a Prophecy; so that the Prophets must help us out with this. I find *Blood*, generally speaking, taken in one of two Senses: As for Guilt, *Ezek.* ix. 9. *The Land is full of Blood, and the City full of Perverseness*; We are not to take it so here, because these Vials are Plagues for Guilt: Or Judgments, which is a very common Acceptation of the Word, *Ezek.* xvi. 38. *I will judge thee, --- and give thee Blood in Fury and Jealousy.* This seems to be the Meaning of it in this Place, from *v.* 6. *Thou hast given them Blood to drink.* I own, this appears rather to respect the third than the second Vial, because Men do not use to drink of the Sea, but of Rivers and Fountains: Yet still I see not

how we can change the Senſe of Blood, tho' *Fountains* and *Rivers* may ſignify ſomething diſtinct from *Sea*.

But, beſides, we are to take the Effect in Conjunction with the Conſequent, and ſo *Sea* will ſignify that Place where People live, while it retains its wonted Nature; but having undergone ſuch a notable Change, nothing could live in it. Here it is ſaid, the *Sea became Blood*; and not like to Blood, as our own and ſome other Tranſlations have it: So that certainly there is ſome very mortal Stroke intended to that Part of the Beaſt's Dominions, which the Spirit of God deſigns under the Type of *Sea*, whether it ſignify *Europe* or not; tho', I own, that bids faireſt for the Senſe. Again, to convince us this will not be an ordinary Stroke, it is added, this Blood will *be as of a dead Man*. It is not ſaid of a ſlain Man, whoſe Blood is ſhed and poured out; for then the Meaning would be, the Sea would be carried out of its Chanel, which the Phraſe will not allow us to think: But the Similitude is taken from a *dead Man*, or a Corps, as the Word commonly ſignifies, *Mat.* viii. 22. *Let the Dead bury their Dead.* Luke xix. 30. *If one ſhould riſe from the Dead.* Now, while it is ſaid, the *Sea will become Blood as of a dead Man*, the Meaning muſt be, the Waters of the Sea will be as unfit for maintaining theſe Creatures in it, as the Blood of a dead Man is unfit to ſupport and cheriſh his Body, for the Life is in the Blood; but when a Man is dead, the Blood, which in a living Man did circulate thorow all the Parts of the Body, coagulates, and is fit for no Uſe of Life or Motion; It is like the Sea when Ground-frozen.

3. The Conſequent flowing mediately from the *Vial*, and immediately from its Effect, *And every living Soul died in the Sea.* This is the natural Effect of either a dried, or Ground-frozen Sea; for all that live in it, muſt of Neceſſity die: And this being here propheſied againſt the *Beaſt*, his *Image*, and their *Worſhippers*, plainly intimates, theſe will be the only Sufferers. That it is ſaid *Every one*, is not ſtrictly to be taken here, more than in many other Places of Scripture, but for ſome of all Sorts and Qualities; elſe we muſt believe this ſecond *Vial* to put a full End to *Antichriſt* in that Part of his Dominions, here repreſented by the Sea, which will not agree with what is contained in the other *five Vials*. I incline not narrowly to ſcan the Cauſe of his Death by the Stagnation of the *Sea*, which has furniſhed ſeverals with curious, but uncertain Thoughts; only I offer a Conjecture more, added to the many others.

It ſeems probable, this Judgment will be directed againſt that Part of *Antichriſt*'s Kingdom in the Weſt, *i. e. Europe*, in which many of his Followers will periſh, and that *Europe* will then in a great Meaſure throw off his Yoke; ſo that this *trafficking Fry* will not find living in many other Kingdoms, more than now they have in *Britain*, *Holland*, *Denmark*, &c. and leſs in theſe Places than now they enjoy. But, who ſhall be the Inſtruments to bring about this, we muſt leave Providence to diſcover.

I am now to touch at the Difference betwixt the ſecond *Trumpet*, as we had it, *Chap.* viii. 8, 9. and this ſecond *Vial*. In the Trumpet a burning Mountain was caſt into the Sea, *i. e.* ſome notable Power did diſtreſs the ſame: A Vial is poured out here. In the *Trumpet* only a *third Part* of the *Sea* was turned into Blood, here the *whole Sea*, i. e. all *Europe*, ſo far as the Intereſt of *Antichriſt* reaches, will ſmart for it. In the *Trumpet* only a third Part of the Creatures that live in the *Sea* died; here their Deſtruction will be more univerſal: So that ſtill what I offered in the firſt *Vial*, ſeems to hold, that there is a great Difference betwixt the *Trumpets* and *Vials* in Degree; for thoſe will be much heavier than theſe; and conſequently the *Vials* will follow the *Trumpets*.

VIAL. III.

4 And the third Angel poured out his Vial upon the Rivers, and Fountains of Waters, and they became Blood.

5 And I heard the Angel of the Waters ſay, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and waſt, and ſhalt be; becauſe thou haſt judged thus.

6 For they have ſhed the Blood of Saints and Prophets, and thou haſt given them Blood to drink; for they are worthy.

7 And

7 And I heard another out of the Altar ſay, Even ſo, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy Judgments.

HERE alſo we have, 1. The Object. 2. The Effect. 3. The Conſequents.

1. The *Object* upon which the *Vial* is poured, *The Rivers, and Fountains of Waters.* I gave the Senſe of theſe on the *third Trumpet*, Chap. viii. 10. They ſignify the Courts of Kingdoms, and all Nurſeries of Learning and Polity. I ſhall only a little illuſtrate it further; All Fountains diſcharge themſelves into the Rivers, and the Rivers empty themſelves into the Sea. It is evident the *Papal* and *Mahometan* Intereſt is compoſed of many *Kingdoms, Principalities*, and *Way-woods*, &c. which all run into the common *Alveus* or Sea. Again, all Seminaries and Nurſeries are ſo ordered, that they may furniſh Perſons will be fit and well trained Tools for their ſeveral Purpoſes, either in a civil or religious Capacity: And ſo a Stroke upon them will very ſenſibly and ſuddenly have a malevolent Influence upon their ſeveral Powers. It is ſufficiently known how much Confidence Popes have put in their religious Houſes (as they call them) pertaining to their ſeveral Orders: And one of them boaſted, He could raiſe more Men out of them, than many Kings could out of all their Dominions. The *Mahometan* Powers have alſo been at great Pains to ſtore their *Seraglios* and *Academies*, for the Service of their State, and the Support of their Deluſions.

2. The Effect of this Vial upon the Objects, *And they became Blood.* In the former Vial we gave the Meaning of this, which we are to adhere to. From the whole, it would appear theſe Inſtruments God will raiſe up at this Time, whether one or mo, will take a like and as effectual a Method for remedy of the Evils of *Courts, Univerſities*, &c. as was obſerved in *Britain* and other Places about the Reformation, which has proven a notable Expedient againſt the Progreſs of *Popery*. In our own Times it may be remembred, when Efforts were made to introduce that *curſed Idolatry*, their firſt Plots were how to corrupt the *Courts* and *Seminaries of Learning*; for the Faction well knows the Truth of this, *Quo ſemel eſt imbuta recens*, &c. and that Encouragement does much influence Perſons in their Principles and Practice.

3. The Conſequents; one, *v.* 5. and 6. the other, *v.* 7. both *Doxologies.*

(1.) Doxology is very notable; nor ſhall I enquire whether it is grounded on all the *three Vials*, or if it ſpecially relate to the *third*, which is more probable, tho' I ſee no Harm in allowing it to reſpect to the other two alſo. For the Underſtanding thereof, I ſhortly view theſe Things in it; 1. The Author of this Thankſgiving, *The Angel of the Waters.* Some think from this Clauſe, and that, *Chap.* xiv. 18. where we read of an *Angel that had Power over Fire*, that God has appointed Angels over the ſeveral Elements: But this is to be wiſe above what is written; beſides, it ſavours not a little of *Paganiſm.* I take this *Angel* to be the ſame with him that had the third Vial committed to him. The Senſe of all theſe Angels I gave before. 2. The Thankſgiving itſelf, *Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and waſt, and ſhalt be.* The Characters they here aſcribe to God are his Sovereignty, *Lord*, of which ſee *Chap.* i. 8, and *Chap.* xv. 3. And his *Eternity*, of which ſee *Chap.* i. 8. Nor ſhall I ſpend Time in enquiring into the Different Readings of the laſt of theſe, where ſome Copies have ὁ ἐσομένος, *to be*; ὁ ἐρχομένος, *to come*; or ὁ ὅσιος, *Holy*: Becauſe the two firſt are agreeable to *Chap.* i. 8. and iv. 8. and other Places of this *Prophecy*; and the laſt is agreeable to *Chap.* iii. 7. *Whoſe Name is Holy.* And, *Chap.* iv. 8. *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.* But the firſt, as it is the moſt common, ſeems to be the beſt. That which they extol in God is his Righteouſneſs, *Thou art righteous.* Tho' there be a Mixture of all the Divine Perfections in every one of God's Works, yet each of his great Productions have ſome one particular Attribute of his, ſpecially manifeſted, and which the Saints ſhould take Notice of. The particular Divine Excellency which ſhines moſt in this Judgment, is *Righteouſneſs*; tho' there be alſo much of his *Power, Wiſdom* and *Holineſs* therein. 3. The Ground of this Thankſgiving, *Becauſe thou haſt judged thus*, i. e. in pouring out the *Vials* of his Diſpleaſure upon the *Worſhippers* of the *Beaſt*: So that, when God will ſend forth theſe Inſtruments of his on this Expedition, he will ſatisfy them about the Equity of his Procedure; and it will be for the Honour of God they will undertake it. The Amplification of this Reaſon we have, *v.* 6. *For they have ſhed*, &c. The Truth of which we had fully on *Chap.* xii. and xiii. There is no Difficulty in the Words, and therefore we paſs them.

(2.) Doxology is, *v.* 7. Where we notice, 1. The Author thereof, *Another*, i. e. *Angel out of the Altar*, which may be the ſame we heard of, *Chap.* xiv. 18. or ſome ſuch. It looks to be the Miniſters of the Goſpel on the Head of Chriſtian-aſſemblies, who join in praiſing God for the Works of his Juſtice upon *Babylon.* 2. The Thankſ-

giving itſelf, *Even ſo, Lord God Almighty*, &c. This is the ſame in Subſtance with the firſt; God is here juſtified of all that are about him; *Church* and *State* will eccho to one another the high Praiſes of their great and exalted Lord.

The Differences betwixt the third *Trumpet*, Chap. viii. 10, 11. and this *Vial*, will not be found leſs than in the former two. As in the *Trumpet* a *Star* fell, here a *Vial* is poured out: In the *Trumpet* only a third Part of the Rivers and Fountains were affected, here the whole: In the Effect the Waters were made bitter by the *Trumpet*; it is true that Bitterneſs was mortal to many, but here they are turned to Blood; ſo that the *Vial* will prove a much heavier and more univerſal Stroke than the *Trumpet*.

VIAL IV.

8 And the fourth Angel poured out his Vial upon the Sun, and Power was given unto him to ſcorch Men with Fire.

9 And Men were ſcorched with great Heat, and blaſphemed the Name of God, which hath Power over theſe Plagues, and they repented not to give him Glory.

EXpoſitors are more ſtraitned with this than any of the former, which may occaſion leſs Clearneſs in the Interpretation. However, we ſhall conſider alſo in this, 1. The Object. 2. The Effect. 3. The Conſequents.

1. The Object, *The Sun*. Some take this literally, and think it the Emblem of a notable Famine, by a long and continued Drought, which not only occaſions Scarcity of all Things neceſſary to ſupport the Life of Man, but alſo extreme Sickneſs, as we have it threatned, *Lev.* xxvi. 16. *I will appoint over you Terror, and the Burning Ague, which ſhall conſume the Eyes, and cauſe Sorrow of Heart.* Above, I ſhewed it to be a moſt uncertain Way of unfolding Prophecies, to take them *literally*: But in this Place it will certainly be the wrong Way, becauſe we are ſure all thoſe laſt Plagues are to light immediately and directly upon *ſpiritual Babylon*, as we ſee from *v.* 1. where it is called the *Earth*, and explained, *v.* 2. by the Beaſt and his Image: But we are ſure that Famine hits all indifferently, good or bad; and to be ſure there will be many Saints living in the ſame Regions with Idolaters; for we nowhere read they will be ſeparate from them, as the *Iſraelites* were in the Land of *Goſhen*: And ſo this is to be meant of ſome Plague upon *Papiſts* and *Mahometans* allenarly.

Others again underſtand this of the Goſpel, which will be moſt galling to *Antichriſt*, by diſcovering all their latent Wickedneſs, and confuting their damnable Errors, as we ſee the *Jews* were incenſed with Chriſt's Doctrine; for it is ſaid, *Luke* iv. 28. *When they heard theſe Things, they were filled with Wrath.* Some other Scriptures they produce, which compare the Word of God to Fire. Men of great Name have taken up with this, and for their Sakes I could wiſh I might get Clearneſs to join them: But ſeveral Things ſtand in the Way; as, 1. I never hear the Goſpel was ſent to any as a Curſe, for it is one of the beſt Gifts and Bleſſings: And that ſometimes it is called *the Savour of Death unto Death to ſome*, is not from the Nature of the Goſpel, nor the Deſign of God in ſending it; but it flows from their own Corruption, and is no proper or direct Effect of the Word, as all own; and therefore 'tis hard to bring it in any Senſe under the Deſignation of a *Plague*, as the Contents of this *Vial* is expreſly called, *v.* 9. And beſides, we ſee all the Vials were filled with Wrath, but to be ſure the Goſpel is a Veſſel of Mercy. 2. We are not to think that the Purity and Power of a preached Goſpel will be reſtrained; for it has been prevailing ſince the *ſixth Seal*, and will do ſo more and more, till *Antichriſt* be deſtroyed. Yea, the Errors of *Popery* and *Mahometaniſm* have been detected and refuted by many excellent Hands; nor can we expect much more to be done that Way, except the reſuming and improving what former Worthies have laid to our Hand. 3. On the fourth *Trumpet* I proved that *Sun* has no Relation to *Chriſt* or his *Goſpel*, but when it is ſpoken of the *Church*, as in the 12th Chapter; but when the Prophecy concerns *Babylon*, it has quite a different Import, as we ſaw on *Chap.* vi. 12.

Others again think, by *Sun* we are to underſtand ſome *great Man*, or *Sett of Men*, that ſupport *Babylon*; and here ſome think it is directed againſt the *Grand Turk*; others refer it to the *Pope*; ſome again to the *Emperor*, &c. I repone to all theſe at once, This is a Judgment levelled againſt both the *Pope* and *Mahomet*, and therefore cannot

be

be underſtood of any one of them, or of any King or Emperor that adheres to their Intereſt: For tho' ſome *Mahometan* Kings take fooliſh Titles to themſelves, as, *the Brother of the Sun*, &c. yet this will not ſay we are to fetch the Explication of a Text in Scripture therefrom. Beſides, allowing that any of theſe ſhould be the *Sun* in the Emblem, it is to make him very great and formidable, and to torment after an extraordinary Manner, not only *Papiſts* and *Pagans*, but even *Mahometans*: Whereas in this Emblem the Sun is made to ſuffer, which he could not do if he was to be active in Miſchief to others. I know this is denied that the Sun is to be *paſſive*, and they make him very *active*: This is a very unequal Way of explaining Scripture; for none ever doubted but all the other Objects ſuffered by the pouring out of the Vials, and yet offer no Reaſon why this ſhould be active, while the reſt are paſſive. Nor can I ſee any but this, that it belongs to the Nature of the Sun to ſcorch; and he being firſt mentioned, and then *Scorching* following, they conclude it is the *Sun* that *ſcorcheth*. We read this Word ſeldom in the New Teſtament, only twice in the Parable of the Sower, beſides the Text; but the Primitive is *Burning* by any Cauſe: And the moſt occulate in the *Greek* tell us, There is no Difference betwixt καίω and καυματίζω; only that the firſt is leſs mild in the Force of the Word, and the other more ſoft. But then, if the *Sun* be *paſſive* under the *Vial*, how were Men *ſcorched*? To be ſure not by the Sun, for the pouring out of the Vials diſtreſſeth all the Objects: And it is not to be ſuppoſed it would increaſe the Heat of the Sun, or his Light either, but rather diminiſh both. If it ſhould be ſaid that the *Angel* ſcorched the Men, it would remove this; and why might not he do this, tho' the Sun be the Object under this Vial, as well as turn the *Sea* and *Waters* into *Blood*, under the preceeding Ones? It is reponed to this, The Angels had no more to do but pour out the Vials, and ſo this *Scorching* is none of his Work: Yet this is not ſo ſtrong as oblige us to go in to any of theſe Opinions before advanced; for one of two muſt be ſuppoſed, to keep an Analogy in the Prophecy of the *Vials*, that either the Angel ſcorched them, or the Wrath in his Vial. But ſay they, This comes but by ſecond-hand from the Vial, after it is poured out upon the Sun; yet this is ſtill to ſuppoſe the *Sun* to be *active*, and not prove it. And the Text furniſheth with another Argument againſt this, for whoever had this Power muſt be capable of Authority; for ſo indeed the Word ἐξουσία properly ſignifies, and we eſtabliſhed it above. Now, this being a rational Power or Quality, it requires a rational Subject, which cannot be the Sun; for if they condeſcend on the Sun, then they make him mad, and renew the old Fable of *Phaëton*; and it is to ſuppoſe all that he commands, who are to be equal Sufferers, to be as mad as himſelf.

That which then I take to be the Senſe of the Words is ſhortly, This *Vial* full of Wrath will blaſt the Excellency or Proſperity of the Beaſt and his Image, and they will be quite darkned: For we are ſure a Third of the Sun was darkned under the *fourth Trumpet*, and continues ſo till the *fourth Vial* brings an univerſal Darkneſs; and this continues and is increaſed by the *fifth Vial*. Under this Darkneſs the *Angel*, by vertue of that Authority beſtowed on him from God, ſcorches or burns them; this is a Prelude to Hell, where there is Darkneſs, and great burning or ſcorching Heat. As for that Conceit, the *Angels* have no more to do but pour out their Vials; This is all demanded: For the given Senſe of this is, They are to execute the Will of God upon *Babylon*. We ſee this makes the Difficulty leſs, and the *Vials* to be the more an Augmentation of theſe Miſeries contained in the *Trumpets*. Beſides, I would not have a Text plainly croſſed, by alledging this *Scorching* is proper to the *Sun*; for it is expreſly ſaid, It was to be by Fire, which is a Heat quite different from that of the Sun. This will then be a heavier Stroke than any of the three former; which will caſt up more plainly from,

2. The Effect, *Men were ſcorched with great Heat; with Fire*, v. 8. This is a moſt exquiſite and ſenſible Pain; and that it will be general, will make it the more confounding: Yet it ſems plain it will be more galling than killing, tho' no doubt all theſe Vials will be bloody, but the Throng of them will be reſerved to ſee and feel the Fruits of their Rebellion againſt God. We will more opportunely meet with the Senſe of this Expreſſion, *Chap.* xvii. 16. which I take to be the Amplification thereof, where alſo we may have ſome further Diſcoveries of this *Angel*.

3. The Conſequents, which are two;

(1.) *They blaſphemed the Name of God.* We heard of this before, *Chap.* xvi. 6. but here ſome further Aggravation is hinted at, in their doing it now: For before, God ſuffered them to riſe with little Oppoſition, and they, out of Pride, opened their Mouth againſt him and his Saints, whom they both deſpiſed and hated, tho' he did not then purſue them with his juſt Wrath; but now, in a deſperate Manner they fall foul of God, even while they are ſmarting under his Hand: This is the higheſt Step of Obduratneſs, and

imports their Reſolvedneſs to adhere to their own Meaſures. This is further evident from the additional Aggravation, that they knew *God had Power over theſe Plagues*: For tho' it be not ſaid they underſtood ſo much, yet it ſeems plainly couched up in the Expreſſion, which is given as a greatning Circumſtance of their Sin and Wickedneſs: Nor can any Temper favour more of Satan, than to blaſpheme while they are under the Hand of God.

(2.) The next Conſequent is their Impenitency, *They repented not, to give him Glory.* We had both Clauſes of this before, the firſt on Chap. ix. 21. the other on Chap. xi. 13. As it ſtands, it plainly points at their Duty, and diſcovers the merciful Nature of God: As alſo, it tells us how we are to carry under all Afflictions, and to ſhew us God never pleads with any in Wrath, whom his merciful Dealings can engage to a more becoming Carriage.

The Harmony betwixt this Vial, and the fourth Trumpet, is very noticeable; But the Difference is more ſo: The Trumpet, Chap. viii. 12. repreſents to us the *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Stars*, as ſuffering under that Judgment; here Mention is only made of the Sun: Nor do I ſee we can add the reſt, ſeeing there is no Warrant from the Text. In the *Trumpet* only a third Part of them were darkned, here we have no Word of Darkneſs; and it would appear the whole Sun was ſmitten, it is very preſumeable it was with Darkneſs alſo. In the Trumpet there is a Time limited, and but a ſhort one, tho' we cannot know how long; but I am of the Mind, before that Time was to paſs, this Vial will overtake them: And, whatever the Nature of this Plague be, we have no Account of their Relief from it; and therefore we may conclude it will laſt till their final Deſtruction under the ſeventh Vial.

VIAL V.

10 And the fifth Angel poured out his Vial upon the Seat of the Beaſt, and his Kingdom was full of Darkneſs, and they gnawed their Tongues for Pain,

11 And blaſphemed the God of Heaven becauſe of their Pains, and their Sores, and repented not of their Deeds.

HERE we obſerve the ſame Method.

1. The Object, *the Seat of the Beaſt.* I ſpoke of this at Length on Chap. xiii. 2. For it is the ſame Word, *Throne*, here as there. The Difficulty is, which of the Beaſts is this to be underſtood of? To be ſure it is not the *Dragon*, for he had quit his Seat to the *Beaſt*, i. e. the *Pope*: So that it muſt be meant either of the *Beaſt*, or of his *Image*. Theſe who mean nothing by the *Seat*, but a City, make the *Seat* of the one to be *Rome*, and of the other *Conſtantinople*, called of old, *New Rome*; The Seat of the Beaſt, ſay they, will then be deſtroyed. But it is plain a Sovereign may tranſlate his Court from one City to another, and yet loſe nothing of his Power; and the Metropolis of an Empire may alſo be deſtroyed, and yet the Government to which it belonged ſubſiſt: And ſo this *Throne* muſt ſignify the Nature of the Government. But if this Vial ſhall overturn both the Seat of the Beaſt, and the Seat of his Image, is not evident from the Text: I rather incline to think, it is only, at leaſt mainly, meant of the Papal Government; becauſe we read of the Beaſt, and not of his Image, which this Plague will ſhatter to Pieces: Then, in all Probability, the *College of Cardinals* will be diſſolved, and the *Hierarchy* tumble down.

2. The Effect, *and his Kingdom was full of Darkneſs.* Certainly this is to be underſtood of the *Beaſt's Kingdom*: 'Tis but juſt, they ſhould be envelop'd in Darkneſs, who reſiſt the Light of God's Word and Spirit, and who indeavour to keep all his Subjects in profound Darkneſs. This ſeems to allude to one of the *Plagues* of *Egypt*, when it is ſaid, *Exod.* x. 22. *There was a thick Darkneſs in all the Land of* Egypt: Yet we will not find therefrom the Senſe of this Vial. We have a Paſſage by the Prophet *Joel*, which bids fairer for Help in this Matter, *Joel* ii. 2. *A Day of Darkneſs, and of Gloominеſs; a Day of Clouds, and thick Darkneſs.* Which by all Expoſitors is underſtood of Confuſion, Perplexity, and Sadneſs; that they knew not what Hand to turn to: Counſel as well as Courage failed them, for they will ſee no Outgate from their Miſery. And the Greatneſs of this will appear by viewing,

3. The Conſequents after-mentioned, 1. *They gnawed their Tongues for Pain.* This is an Action that expreſſeth the greateſt Conſternation we can imagine any to be in, when

when they bite their Tongues, being unable either to do or ſay any Thing for their own Cauſe; as if they would turn that Indignation home upon themſelves, which they cannot with Succeſs diſcharge upon others. This is a Fit of Horror much a-kin to what our Lord tells is the Exerciſe of the Damned; for, *Mat.* xxii. 13. *They weep and wail and gnaſh with their Teeth,* for Pain and Anguiſh. 2. They *blaſphemed the God of Heaven, becauſe of their Pains and their Sores.* Of this on *v.* 9. and the Quotations. The additional Ground ſeems to ſay, little Time will be conſumed on theſe Vials, and the Effects of the firſt Vial will not be removed when the fifth comes; the Vials will give incurable Wounds. 3. *They repented not of their Deeds.* Of this we ſpoke above. They will mend under no Judgment, but rather grow worſe, as we ſee here.

The Difference betwixt this fifth Vial and the fifth Trumpet, as we have it, Chap. v. 1, *&c.* is ſo great, that I wonder any ſhould ſpend Time to prove their Identity; and are oft put to the hard Neceſſity of wreſting the Scripture, rather than forego their Fancies. There is not the leaſt Analogy betwixt them; for in the Trumpet there is a *fallen Star* gets the Key of the *Bottomleſs Pit,* which he opens, and thence iſſues a Multitude of *Locuſts,* whoſe Hiſtory is there deſcribed; here we have no ſuch Thing, nor any Expreſſion which, without the greateſt Violence to all the Rules of right Interpretation, can be brought to favour that Suppoſition.

VIAL. VI.

THIS Vial imploys five Verſes, which are all material. In the 12. *v.* we have both the Object and Effect, and in the reſt what followed.

12 And the ſixth Angel poured out his Vial upon the great River Euphrates, and the Water thereof was dried up, that the Way of the Kings of the Eaſt might be prepared.

I. The Object, *The great River* Euphrates. I gave the *Geography* and *Hiſtory* of this River, on Chap. ix. 13. where I alſo proved it is not to be taken literally in that Place; which Reaſons will conclude the ſame here. 'Tis true, there is an Analogy betwixt the Emblem and its Signification, which was touched on before, and ſhall be further noticed here. It will not be refuſed by any, that the *Vials* are *Plagues,* all of them upon *myſtical Babylon,* but diverſly directed, as we have ſeen: And ſo this falls by Divine Appointment upon the River *Euphrates,* at leaſt upon that which ſtands in the ſame ſtead to *myſtical Babylon* that *Euphrates* did to *literal Babylon.* So that our Method to form ſome plauſible Conjecture about the *Intendment* of this Text, is to enquire what Uſe and Service *literal Babylon,* in her Glory, had by this *River*; and then to enquire what can anſwer to that in *myſtical Babylon*; and this will make the Senſe of *Euphrates,* which is ſo much controverted: For it ſeems unfair to allow the Name of *Babylon* a myſtical Signification, and yet deny it to *Euphrates,* of which we had not heard ſo much in Scripture, if that proud City had not ſtood upon its Banks, and made ſo much Uſe of it to all Purpoſes.

We ſhewed before, that this *River* was of ſpecial Uſe to that great City; for one of the artificial Canals from it to *Tygris,* brought up to the City Veſſels of conſiderable Burden, a great Encouragement to Trade: Another Grain of this *River* was carried quite thro' the Town, having its Banks well fortified, with convenient Stairs at due Diſtance, to go down and come up. It had two ſtately Gates, one for receiving the Water at the one Side of the Town, and another at the other Side, thro' which it paſſed; theſe Gates were fifteen Miles from other: The Water-Paſſages were well fenced with brazen Gates or Shutters, which were open all Day for Trade and Pleaſure, and ſhut all Night for Security. Again, without the City there was an artificial Lake or Baſin, 40 Miles Square, and 160 in Compaſs, which received the overflowing Waters, during the Months of *June, July,* and *Auguſt*; for at that Time the Snow, melted on the Mountains, do ſwell the River to ſuch a Pitch, that if there had not been ſuch a Device as this, the River would have endangered much of the City. The Waters of this great Baſin were let out by convenient Sluices, for watering the Country about, and providing both Man and Beaſt with Water for all Uſes. Theſe Brooks were ſet with Willows, and the interjected Spaces were very fertile and beautiful: So we read, that the captive *Jews hang'd their Harps upon the Willows,* Pſal. cxxxvii. 2. This great Lake is in Scripture called *the Sea of* Babylon, *and her Springs,* Iſa. xxxi. 36. Becauſe, as

from a common Ciſtern, all theſe watering Streams did flow. When the *Spirit of God* ſpeaks of this River, we find it often deſign'd in the plural Number, *Iſa.* l. 2. *I will make thy Rivers a Wilderneſs*; No doubt, becauſe of the three Chanels. From all this it is eaſy to find the Uſefulneſs of this River to that great City, for the Supply of their Neceſſity, for their Pleaſure, and Defence.

Tho' this does not ſolve the Difficulty, it paths the Way thereto; for by it we know, the Fountains of their Pleaſure, Profit, and Security, will all be ſtopt; that their Treaſures will be no more fed and nouriſhed: Yea, beſides this, the *ſixth Vial* will break all the Alliances of the Beaſt, and his Image; we will find this *Vial* will effectually reach them both.

II. The Effect of this Vial upon the River, and the Deſign of this Effect, which we ſhall conſider apart.

1. The Effect, *The Water thereof was dried up*; where it is plain, this Object was paſſive, under the Stroke of the *Vial*. This plainly points at the Deſtruction of *literal Babylon*, concerning which we have Prophecies in the ſame Words, *Jer.* xliv. 37, 38. *That ſaith to the Deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy Rivers.* That this is ſpoken of the Ruin of *Babylon*, is plain; for in that ſame Chapter, *God ſaith of* Cyrus, *He is my Servant, or Shepherd, and ſhall perform all my Pleaſure.* It was this *Cyrus* that deſtroyed *Babylon*, and this was propheſied of him before the Captivity of *Judah*, and conſequently long before that great Man was born. There is another notable Paſſage to this Purpoſe, *Jer.* xxxi. 31, 32. *One Poſt ſhall run to meet another, and one Meſſenger to meet another, to tell the King of* Babylon, *that his City is taken at one End, and that the Paſſages are ſtopped* [originally, the Water-Courſes or Foords are occupied or ſeized] *and the Reeds are burnt with Fire.* I chooſe the original Reading, becauſe it agrees better with the true Import of the *Hebrew*; for the Word ſignifies a *Water-Gate*, at which either it enters or runs out: Beſides, it is very agreeable to the Context; for Reeds grow not but among Water, which Reeds were burnt to facilitate the Entry of *Cyrus* and his Army.

This will be more plain, if we get a Sketch of the Hiſtory of the Taking of *Babylon* at that Time. It happened under the Reign of *Darius*, about 539 Years before Chriſt, by the Proneneſs and Conduct of the Great *Cyrus* a *Perſian* Prince, and Commander of the King of *Medes* Army. This *Cyrus* having ſubdued the whole Country about *Babylon*, reſolved to attack the City itſelf; but its Walls were ſuch, he had little Thoughts of Succeſs, for the Walls were about 80 Foot in Breadth or Thickneſs, 360 Foot in Height, and 60 Miles in Compaſs; and therefore he reſolved to turn the Siege into a Blocade, and ſo ſtarve them. But this would have been as unſucceſful; becauſe, beſides the Plenty of Stores the Gariſon had provided themſelves with, and good Water running plentifully thorow the City, there were a great many large Fields for Pleaſure within the Walls, which they turned into arable Ground, and thence had a great yearly Produce; ſo that in twenty Years he could not expect to bring them to Terms, which he felt, after he had inveſted it near two Years; and deſpairing to become Maſter of the Town this Way, he bethought himſelf of a Stratagem, and a fit Seaſon offered itſelf, *viz.* that great Feaſt we read of in *Daniel*, Chap. v. 1. when *Belſhazzar* entertained a Thouſand Lords at his own Charge, and drunk their Wine out of the Veſſels of the *Lord's Houſe*; In which Feaſt, they rioted the whole Day, and ſo at Night forgot to ſhut their Water-gates, and continued their Revel in the Night, during which, *Cyrus* ſent a great Detachment to break down the Bank or Damm betwixt the River (at leaſt that Part of it which run thorow the City) and the great Baſin; ſo that all the Water that uſed to run thorow the Town, emptied itſelf in the Lake: And then his Men entred the City, one Part of them where the River run into the City, and the other where it came out, and ſurpriſed them all in Drink and Security. It was that Night *the Hand wrote upon the Wall.* Thus we ſee a beautiful Harmony betwixt the Prophecy and its Accompliſhment. This I take to be truly the Thing alluded to, and then all that we can ſafely ſay about it is, That God will ſurpriſe ſpiritual *Babylon* with a notable and unexpected Decay of her Friends and Treaſure, which will make way for her Downfall under this Vial, and utter Extirpation under the next. By whom may caſt up in the next,

2. The great Deſign of this Effect, *That the Way of the Kings of the Eaſt may be prepared.* As in the Hiſtory alluded to, it was a Part of that ſame Army that dried the River, which alſo immediately entred the City, *i. e.* they were Kings of the Eaſt; for *Darius* was King of the *Medes*, and *Cyrus* his Son-in-law was a notable Prince of *Perſia*, and both theſe Dominions lay Eaſt from *Babylon.*

It may be objected, Theſe two are nowhere called *Kings of the Eaſt* in the Prophets; yea, it is expreſly ſaid, *Jer.* l. 41. *A great Nation ſhall come from the North.* Which

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Prophecy does certainly reſpect the Surpriſe of *Babylon*; for it is ſaid, *v.* 38. *A Drought is upon her Rivers, for they ſhall be dried up.*

I anſwer, There is no Inconſiſtency, for theſe Eaſtern Kings might come from the North; and it is not ſaid they were Kings of the North, more than of the Eaſt: Or ſome Princes towards the North of *Babylon* might join Iſſue with *Cyrus*, to be revenged of the *Chaldeans*, that had been very uneaſy Neighbours to them: Or *Cyrus* might march againſt *Babylon*, after he had defeat or ſubdued theſe Nations that lay towards the North of *Babylon*, and ſo the Stroke come that Way as is propheſied.

The plain Senſe of the Emblem or Alluſion then is, As *Darius* and *Cyrus* could not enter the Capital of the *Chaldeans*, till the Streams were dried up; ſo theſe Kings of the Eaſt cannot enter *Myſtical Babylon*, till what is repreſented by *Euphrates* be alſo drained; for the Connexion of the ſeveral Parts of the Text obliges us to underſtand it ſo.

But, who theſe *Kings of the Eaſt* are, is not ſo clear: We had the Expreſſion, *From the Eaſt*, Chap. vii. 2. where it is plainly a glorious Character of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who will at that Time begin to ſhine glorioufly in his Goſpel. If the Meaning be ſo here, the Senſe will be eaſy; for they are to be underſtood of *Chriſtian Kings*, whom God will employ to go againſt the *Beaſt* and his *Image*, and may be the ſame we read of in the Cloſe of the next Chapter. I indeed ſee not how theſe *Kings* can be Emblems of the *Jews*, who are to be converted upon the Fall of the *Turk*, which they make the whole Senſe of the Kings of the Eaſt. I own, it is my Judgment, that not only *Turciſm*, but all the other *Mahometan* Powers, will either fall, or be converted; and the ſame is to be ſaid for the *Popiſh* Kings: But that from this we ſhould be informed where the *Jews* are, I ſee no Ground from the Text. I ſhall alſo yield, that about this Time the Reduction of the *Jews* will happen, but then there will be alſo the Fulneſs of the *Gentiles*: Yea, theſe Nations will have the Start of the *Jews*, as we proved above, *Chap.* xi. laſt Verſe. As for the great Reaſon given, That the *Jews* are all to be Eaſtward of *Euphrates*; This is more than I have found proven by any, and is refuſed by ſeverals, who think, tho' there may be a great many of them in theſe Regions, yet, from many probable Conjectures, think more of them are in *America*, which lies from *Euphrates* far Weſt. But indeed, I ſee no Certainty in theſe Things, further than that this *Vial* prognoſticates a very ruining Stroke to *Myſtical Babylon*; but who the Inſtruments will be, we muſt allow Time to reveal.

Upon the Whole, I take this Vial, as well as the reſt, to be a Judgment; and, that the drying up of the Waters, is to make Way for the Approach of an Enemy, and not for the Advancement of a Friend to help him over a Ditch, elſe we muſt leave the Alluſion quite, and where we ſhall go next, is more than I can think of: For theſe who marched thorow the dry Waters of literal *Babylon*, came not there as Friends, but Foes; Nor had they any other Deſign than to ruine it, which they effectually did: And therefore this muſt be the Senſe of it in this Place, elſe I own myſelf to know none.

That which caſts next up is, the Events of this Vial in the next four Verſes, and I find them two; 1. The laſt Efforts of *Babylon* to retrieve her Loſs. 2. Chriſt's ſeaſonable and effectual Interpoſition.

13 And I ſaw three unclean Spirits like Frogs come out of the Mouth of the Dragon, and out of the Mouth of the Beaſt, and out of the Mouth of the falſe Prophet.

14 For they are the Spirits of Devils, working Miracles, which go forth unto the Kings of the Earth, and of the whole World, to gather them to the Battle of that great Day of God Almighty.

Here is, 1. The Emiſſaries of *Babylon*, 2. Their Errand.

I. The *Emiſſaries*; Where, 1. Their Character. 2. Their Reſemblance. 3. Their Number according to their Authors. 4. The Grounds of all theſe Deſignations.

1. Their Character, *Unclean Spirits*; they are not *Hobgoblins*, but Men, yet truly liker to *Devils* than *Men*. We are to underſtand *Spirits* here in the ſame Senſe with the Apoſtle, 1 *John* iv. 1. *Try the Spirits whether they are of God, becauſe many falſe Prophets are gone out into the World.* Where it is beyond Debate, that ſome *Spirits* and *falſe Prophets* are the ſame, and that theſe muſt be *unclean Spirits*. They have the Deſignation *Spirit*, from their ſecret Way of working, and their penetrating Nature. They are called *unclean* or impure, becauſe of their Falſhood, and the Wickedneſs of both their Principles and Practices: They would allure and entice Men to every

Thing contrary to true Goſpel-Holineſs; and for this Reaſon it is, the Devils caſt out by our Lord are called *unclean* and *impure*.

2. Their Reſemblance, *Like unto Frogs*. No doubt there is an Alluſion to the Frogs ſent upon *Egypt*, Exod. viii. 1, &c. yet we may not think they were ſhapen like *Frogs*, no; for the Similitude rather denotes ſomething in them does reſemble ſomething in the Frogs, elſe they will make very unfit Ambaſſadors for Kings: Nor can I find better how to order the Reſemblance, than from what is ſaid of the Frogs in the above-quoted Place, *v.* 3. *The River ſhall bring forth Frogs abundantly, which ſhall go up, and come into thine Houſe, and into thy Bed-chamber, and upon thy Bed; and into the Houſe of thy Servants, and upon thy People, and into thy Ovens, and into thy kneading Troughs.* The Reſemblance will be eaſily made in ſeveral Particulars; as, 1. Their vaſt Number. 2. Their Impudence, without Shame thruſting themſelves in every where, even to the moſt ſecret Retirements. 3. Their Noiſe, for the Frog is a noiſom and croaking Creature; and, as we uſe to ſay of the Owl, has never a Tune but one. 4. Their Greed; for they invaded Tables, Stocks, &c. without Right or Allowance.

3. Their Number, *Three*; which to be ſure we are not to underſtand of *Individuals*, but *Kinds*, according to the following Diſtribution; one Kind from the *Dragon*, i. e. Heatheniſm; one from the *Beaſt*, i. e. Popery; one from the *falſe Prophet*, which is, to be ſure, the *Image of the Beaſt*, ſo often mentioned before, *i. e. Mahometaniſm*. Nor can we take it in any other Senſe here, eſpecially that there is no Mention of the Image of the Beaſt; this all own: But few or none underſtand thereby *Mahomet*, as I have proven in all Reaſon we ſhould. Beſides, his going ſo commonly under the Name of the *falſe Prophet*, by all the World, except his own Votaries, is an Adminicle: And it is beyond doubt, he aſſumed to himſelf the Deſignation of *Prophet*, and his Followers to this Day own him as ſuch; and, may we not allow the *Spirit of God* to add the Epithet of *falſe*, to this ſo undeſerved Character? for indeed his Perſon, Doctrine and Policy were all Impoſture.

Their Production, *Out of the Mouth of the Dragon, Beaſt, and falſe Prophet*. But how? is the Difficulty; for *come* is not in the Original: All own a Verb muſt be ſupplied here, but the Difficulty is which? Some, with our Tranſlation, put in *came*; others add *breathed*, becauſe they are called *Spirits*, or Breaths that iſſued from their *Mouths*; and they think that theſe Frogs will only then begin to be: But, I think, the beſt Way to ſupply this Verb is from ἐκπορεύομαι, which we have in the following Verſe, and is rendered, *they go forth*: And the Verb which anſwers to this is *Sent*, whereby the Meaning will be very obvious, that they were *Meſſengers* or *Envoys* ſent out by the *three Beaſts*. That it is ſaid, they were *ſent out of the Mouth*, and this three Times over, certainly cannot be for Nought. There are a great many different Thoughts about this, which I wave, and ſhall advance a few Things ſeem to be comprehended therein; 1. That their very Being and Conſiſtency is owing to theſe Beaſts Word, *i. e.* they are their Creatures; for ſo Creation is deſcribed in Scripture. God's *fiat* gave every Thing a Being; and, as every Piece of God's Handy-work is like himſelf, *good*, ſo the Productions of theſe three muſt be like themſelves, *evil*. In this Senſe we have this Phraſe, *Lam.* iii. 37, 38. *Who is he that ſaith, and it cometh to paſs, when the Lord commanded it not? Out of the Mouth of the moſt High proceedeth not Evil, but Good*: i. e. God's commanding Power bringeth every Thing that is good to paſs, but nothing that is evil. 2. Theſe Frogs are devoted to the Dictates of their ſeveral Beaſts. As it is with the Servants of God, *Mat.* iv. 4. *They live not by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God*; So theſe mind no Commands, but what come out of the *Beaſts Mouths*. 3. That theſe Spirits are very much in the good Liking of their ſeveral Maſters, and well acquainted with their Secrets and ſiniſter Deſigns.

4. The Grounds of the former Deſignations, *v.* 14. *For they are the Spirits of Devils, working Miracles*. As for the firſt of theſe, *they are the Spirits of Devils*; it does not appear an ill Interpretation to ſay they are Spirits of Devils, becauſe they belong to the Beaſts, for theſe are acted of the *Devil*: Or, if we go nearer, becauſe theſe Emiſſaries hatched by the Beaſts, are directed by Devils, who ſupport them in, as well as prompt them to all their Miſchief; and ſo we will be under no Neceſſity to take them for Fiends, as ſome incline to do, for ſuch Meſſengers would rather affright than prevail with the Kings of the Earth. As for the other, that they *work Miracles*; this is not to be taken properly either, but we gave the Senſe of it on *Chap.* xiii. 13, 14.

After all this Explication of theſe *Spirits*, it will require little Thought to find out who theſe Emiſſaries will be; for no doubt they are the Prieſts or *Sacrificuli* of all the three, who are the moſt devoted to the Service of their ſeveral Maſters. We before ſhewed the Harmony betwixt the *Dragon* and the *Beaſt*, and betwixt the *Beaſt* and his *Image*, as to their Maxims and Methods of Procedure; which naturally infers a Likeneſs and Reſem-

ſemblance betwixt their ſeveral Tools, they being all groſs Idolaters. Here it is no hard Matter to find the *Loilites*, or *Jeſuites*, as they call themſelves; but then it is no leſs evident they are not to laſt only a Hundred and fifty Years; for it is preſumable the *Pope* will never want their Service while he keeps his Seat, and they will ſtand and fall with him. Yet I would not have the *Jeſuites* to ſwallow up all the Emblem of that Frog, that is ſent out by the Beaſt; for he has more Tools than of one Sort, and theſe might be very unſucceſful with theſe Powers, who have ofter than once felt the Force of their Politicks, and therefore he has of other Orders to diſpatch to them.

II. The Errand upon which the Frogs were ſent, in the reſt of this Verſe. We had an Expreſſion like to this before, Chap. v. 6. *The ſeven Spirits of God ſent forth into all the Earth*: But to a quite different Purpoſe; for before it is ſpoken of the extenſive Power and Knowledge of the *Lamb*, whereby he makes the Means of Grace effectual for the gaining of many Souls: Here it is applied to the *Emiſſaries* of *Babylon*, going forth in Oppoſition to the Kingdom of Chriſt; which, that we may have ſome clear View of, we ſhall notice in this Expedition, 1. To whom they are ſent. 2. For what Purpoſe. 3. Their Diligence.

1. To whom they are ſent, *The Kings of the Earth, and of the whole World.* This is a moſt extenſive Expreſſion; yet to be ſure there is an Exception from it, *viz. The Kings of the Eaſt*, who are to be on one Side, as Antagoniſts to the Beaſt and his Image; and theſe other *Kings*, now to be gathered by the Negotiation of the *unclean Spirits*. Some think, that *the Kings of the Earth*, and Kings of *the whole World*, ſignify the ſame Thing, and that both Expreſſions are join'd to inlarge the Comprehenſion, and is equivalent to a full Enumeration and to make the Expreſſion the more forcible. I ſhall not much oppoſe this; yet it would ſeem in ſuch a ſhort Hint at the greateſt Matters, one Expreſſion is not ſo to be ſwallowed up of another: And therefore, others by *Kings* of the *Earth* underſtand their Quality, all earthly; and by the whole World, their Number. I cannot ſay but this alſo may be allowed: But if not, then by *Earth* we may mean *Aſia*, all the Kings there who have not fallen off from *Babylon*; and by the *whole World*, all the *Mahometan*, *Heathen* and *Popiſh* Powers, in the other three Quarters of the habitable Earth. *Laſtly*, Some alledge this to be no Account of their Succeſs, but only of their Efforts and Eſſays; and ſo we may allow it to paſs in its fulleſt Senſe, that theſe Envoys did attack all, tho' they were not equally ſucceſful. We may chooſe any of theſe we pleaſe: And the rather this is the laſt Effort *Babylon* will make againſt the *Lamb* and his *Followers*; And therefore ſhe will ſtudy to have all poſſible Aſſiſtance.

2. The Purpoſe theſe Spirits have to negotiate with theſe Kings, *To gather them together to the Battle of that great Day of God Almighty.* To be ſure theſe Spirits will not tell them they are to fight againſt God, for this would rather be a *Diſſwaſive* than a *Perſwaſive*: But they will pretend the clean contrary, that they are to fight againſt *Hereticks* and *Infidels*; for no better Names are beſtowed by *Papiſts* and *Mahometans* upon the beſt of *Chriſtians*. But here the *Spirit of God*, by the *Prophet*, ſets down true Matter of Fact, and as it is in itſelf, and not as it is repreſented by the *Spirits*, or complied with by the *Kings*: And therefore, here we have the Deſign of God, which will be exactly anſwered by the Event. This will be eſſay'd on their Part by their united Forces; For theſe *Spirits* will perſwade their gathering together: But whether there will be an Union betwixt the *Beaſt* and his *Image*, ſo that all their Counſels and Armies be mixed together, and meet together in one Place, I ſhall not venture to affirm; tho' one would think ſomething like this ſeems to be in the Text, and would prove a more natural Senſe of the Words than can be offered. I own it wants not Difficulties, as the bringing the ſeveral Parts of this great Army from the moſt diſtant Parts of the World, and that both Armies would be under a Neceſſity thus to collect the ſeveral Branches of their Forces in order to a ſingle Engagement to be deciſive; Yet all this, tho' not very probable, is not impoſſible. We have Aſſurance from unexceptionable *Hiſtories*, that prodigious Armies have been tranſported from one Quarter of the World to another, and done great Fates when they came. I ſay, if this be not allowed, becauſe of the Difficulties already alledged, and others that might be produced, as the oppoſite Natures of theſe *three* Enemies, and their different Deſigns upon other; yet leſs cannot be allowed, than that theſe *Three* conſpire at the ſame Time to ſuppreſs the Kingdom of Chriſt, to which they are equally Enemies. That which will determine them thus to exert themſelves to the utmoſt, is the preceeding Progreſs of the Goſpel, and the ſucceſful Endeavours of *Chriſtian Princes*, will have much weakned their Force in the former Vials; and theſe tottering Thrones of Iniquity being in the laſt Danger of falling to the Ground; and probably theſe Emiſſaries above-ſaid will remind them of the glori-

ous Victories obtained againſt the *Church* in the Days of *Yore*, and ſo whet them into a keener Edge, with Hopes of the like Succeſs in that Expedition.

That here we read of a Day of Battle, called the *great Day*, &c. I think has Alluſion to the old Way of fighting pitched Battles, in which both the *Time* and *Place* were condeſcended on by both *Armies*; and ſo many a Time one ſingle Engagement determined the Point in Debate. That Way of Warring is now out; but whether it ſhall again obtain, I know not, nor is it needful to ſuppoſe it here: Only this I am ſure of, the preciſe Time is fixed of God, tho' both Parties may know little about it. This is all I take to be in the Words, ſave that the Enemies will then receive ſuch an intire Overthrow, as they ſhall never after be able to make Head againſt the Church. Of this more on Chap. xix.

3. Their Diligence, *They go forth*, or *they went forth*, *i. e.* about the Execution of their ſeveral Orders; the *Heatheniſh* Emiſſaries to the *Pagan* Powers; the *Mahometan* Envoys to the ſeveral Kings of their Principles; the *Jeſuites*, and other Orders amongſt the *Papiſts*, will influence the ſeveral Popiſh Dynaſties: All which will be both buſy and ſucceſful, as appears from the Event.

15 Behold, I come as a Thief. Bleſſed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his Garments, leſt he walk naked, and they ſee his Shame.

16 And he gathered them together into a Place, called in the Hebrew Tongue, Armageddon.

In this Event is, (1.) Chriſt's Care about his People. (2.) His Carriage to his Enemies.

I. We have to notice the providential Care of Chriſt about his *own People*, v. 15. This Verſe hath given no ſmall Trouble to Expoſitors, becauſe it comes dropping in, without any Account of the Speaker: This has moved ſome by a bold Stroke to meddle with the Original, and make it run in a Chain with the preceeding Verſe; and they turn the *firſt Perſon* of the *ſingular Number*, *I*, into the *third Perſon* of the *Plural*, *They*; whereby they make this a *Relative* to *the Kings of the Earth*, as the *Antecedent*. But this, inſtead of mending, intirely mars the whole Senſe: For, who ſhould give the Exhortation contained in the ſecond Part of the Text? Not theſe *Kings* gathered by the *unclean Spirits*, and as little the *unclean Spirits* themſelves; becauſe nothing could more croſs their Deſign, than *Watchfulneſs*, and *keeping of their Garments*. Beſides, this Expreſſion of the *Comer* can in no Senſe be applied to *Antichriſt*, eſpecially at the Time pointed at here: For tho' he roſe very ſleely, yet, when he falls, it will be with Obſervation; as we ſhall hear on Chap. xviii. Others tell us, It is an interjected Sentence of the Prophet *John*: But theſe will be found no leſs at a Loſs; for, who ſhould be this *I*? If *Antichriſt*, will any imagine the holy *Apoſtle* ſpeaks in his Name? And if they ſay, he ſpeaks in his *own*, they will mar the Senſe of the whole. Indeed theſe, as we have ſaid, tell us, We muſt read *they*, and ſo it is a Prophecy concerning the ſudden Approach of this great Army: Yet I cannot go in with this either; for this great Gathering come not to give, but to receive a Retribution; and ſo they would make the Apoſtle rather to diſcourage than encourage the *Church* by this Prophecy. Some again own this to be the Voice of God: But ſtill they are for altering the *Original*, and make the laſt Clauſe of *v.* 14. to be the Voice of God calling theſe *Kings* to the Battle of the great Day; and, upon the Back of his Warning to fight in the laſt Verſe, he gives Call to Repentance in this: But, before they can make it out, they are obliged to turn the *firſt* to the *third Perſon*; and ſo they read it, Behold, *he cometh as a Thief*: And thus it is an Exhortation to *Babylon* and her Partizans to keep their Garments clean, and to watch. Yet I humbly think this alſo is too much Freedom with the Text: And indeed the Words plainly purge themſelves from this Senſe; for it ſpeaks of and to theſe whoſe Garments were right and tight before, deſiring them to keep them in that Condition; and is not directed to theſe whoſe Garments need Cleanſing, as to be ſure all that belong to *Babylon* do; for all of them are defiled and polluted. But here I take the Expreſſion to be of God immediately, ſpeaking by the *Prophet* to theſe *Chriſtians* who ſhall flouriſh in that Period of Time; and who, becauſe of that great Preparation, might be in Doubts about the Iſſue of ſuch an univerſal *Gathering together*, and fear the worſt: And ſo the Deſign is to encourage them to the Exerciſe of Faith and Holineſs, that they might be preſerved from the Terror of that great Day, which would both ſurpriſe and deſtroy the Adverſaries. And, for the abrupt Way of introducing this here, it is no more but what we find oftner than once in Scripture, as *Chap.* i. 8. *I am Alpha and Omega*; and, *Chap.* xxii. 12. *Behold, I come quickly.* None doubts but Chriſt

Chriſt is ſpeaking in both theſe Places; and yet the Speech is dropt in without any Connection, at leaſt immediately. Beſides, the Words of the Verſe will not ſuffer us to take this as the Speech of any other but our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; which Speech we are a little further to conſider, as containing theſe two Parts, (1.) A Certification or Advertiſement. (2.) A great Duty plainly implied.

1. The Certification, *Behold, I come as a Thief.* This is an Expreſſion I find nowhere uſed, but when it is applied to Chriſt in the Exerciſe of his *Judgment*: So it is uſed againſt *Jeruſalem*, Mat. xxiv. 34, 35. *If the Good-man of the Houſe had known in what Watch the Thief would come, he would have watched.----Therefore be ye ready, for in ſuch a Hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.* And, 2 *Pet.* iii. 10. *The Day of the Lord will come as a Thief in the Night*, &c. Beſides many other Places to the ſame Purpoſe. I ſee not how any colourable Pretence can be advanced to prove this Coming to be meant of the laſt and *general Judgment*; which yet ſome would be at. It is not the general, becauſe it is only directed againſt *Babylon*, otherwiſe it would take in the whole Race of Mankind: Yea, it is not the *laſt* againſt *Babylon*, becauſe but the *ſixth Vial*; whereas ſhe will not fall but by the *ſeventh*. Nor can we carry this beyond the *ſixth Vial*; for it is a particular Judgment, as we found the ſame Words againſt the Church of *Sardis*, Rev. iii. 3. where alſo I gave the Senſe of the Phraſe.

2. We have a great Duty plainly inſinuate, conſiſting of two Branches, with a notable Evidence of Chriſt's approving of them when conſcienciouſly performed. The Duties are, *Watching, and keeping the Garments*: The firſt of theſe we had under our Conſideration, Chap. iii. 23. and the other we had, at leaſt the Equivalent, Chap. iii. 18. It is true, there is a Difference; for the Quotation exhorts to *get* Garments, here to *keep* them, which ſuppoſes they had them before: Yet we are not to doubt but the *Raiment* and *Garment* ſignify the ſame Thing; and, being clothed, it is the unqueſtionable Duty of a Chriſtian that he ſuffer not his Raiment to be ſoiled, but to keep them in good Order. This plainly teaches, while God is puniſhing Sin in his *Enemies*, he will not tolerate it in his own *People*: Yea, we find many a Time a maim'd Reformation in his *Church*, has obſtructed Deliverance to them, or reprieved Judgments upon their Adverſaries; And therefore it is we have theſe two Duties ſo warmly inculcate here. The Motive preſſing to theſe Duties follow, *Leſt he walk naked, and they ſee his Shame*. Of this we ſpoke before on Chap. iii. 18.

That which I take to be the Senſe of this Paſſage is, God at that Time will ſtir up his Servants of the Miniſtry to reaſon of *Temperance, Righteouſneſs, and Judgment to come*; the moſt ſuitable Subjects to prepare a People againſt common Strokes: For, if they be found Sharers with the Man of Sin in his Practices, how can they hope not to partake with him in his Judgments? The Advantage of *Godlineſs* will be very plainly repreſented, and the Danger of the *Want* thereof as plainly inculcate. I cannot ſay I differ much from a late *Author* deſcanting on this Clauſe, who aſſerts, *There is not any Piece of Religion, which may not by very plain Inferences be drawn naturally from this ſo ſhort a Summary of the Practice of Piety*. And I as little queſtion but God will put in the Heart of his *Servants*, to improve upon theſe great and ſeaſonable Points for the Edification of his *People*.

II. There is the Carriage and Providence of Chriſt towards his Enemies, *v.* 16. *He gathered them together*, &c. This Verſe is no leſs perplexed by a Variety of *Senſes* than the former. Some are ſo foreward as correct the *Original*, for which they pretend the Authority of ſome Copies, but juſtly exceptionable, and render it, *They gathered together*, &c. *i. e.* the *Unclean Spirits* gathered the *Kings*; and ſo they make this the Account of their Succeſs, and the Effect of their Negotiations. But ſeeing we had this hinted before, what Neceſſity is there to come over it again ſo quickly, all that they contend for being in the former Verſe? Beſides, this Senſe of it would ſplit the Texts, the firſt Clauſe of *v.* 15. being introduced with the *firſt Perſon* of the *ſingular Number*; and to make this but a Branch of the ſame Event to come in the *third Perſon* of the *plural Number*, looks not ſo well, nor would ſuch a Turn be tolerable in a common Orator. Others again render the Clauſe imperſonally, *They were gathered together*: But there is ſtill leſs Ground for this, for it is an *active Verb*, and of the *ſingular Number*; And it is generally owned, the Copy our Tranſlation follows, is the beſt. Upon the whole, I chooſe to adhere to our Tranſlation, *He gathered*, i. e. God brought theſe *Kings* together, in the Exerciſe of his holy Providence. Yet, even taking it as it reads in our Bibles, ſome incline to differ, and chalk out a ſeparate Way for themſelves, and bring in another *Perſon* than whom we had in the preceeding Verſe, and put the *Devil* in his Room: Yet we would remark, that tho' we read of unclean *Spirits*, and Spirits of *Devils*, yet they are both in the *plural Number*; and, without a great *Solyciſm* in *Grammar*, we cannot run ſo quickly from the one, *i. e.* the *plural*,

to the other, the *ſinuglar Number*. No doubt the Devil will be very inſtrumental in this Collection, and ſo will the *Unclean Spirits*; but both theſe, without the ſovereign and overruling Providence of God, would not have been effectual to produce the deſigned End. We have a notable Inſtance of this adduced by Mr. *Durham* about the *falſe Prophets*, whom God gave to be ſucceſful in moving *Ahab* to go up to *Ramoth-Gilead*, that he and his Men might fall there; yet there was a *lying Spirit* imployed to ſeduce him. It is not to be queſtioned but there will be ſuch a wrathful Providence againſt *Babylon* at this Time, that they ſhall meet together for their Ruin: So that, as the Providence of God did contribute to the Riſe and Continuation of *Babylon*, it will be no leſs imployed in the Down-fall thereof, which will be as ſudden as certain.

After this the Text gives us a full (I cannot ſay a clear) View of the Field of Battle, *A Place called in the* Hebrew *Tongue*, Armageddon. This is a ſhort Clauſe, but has been a long and tedious Exerciſe to the Learned in all Ages, who have ſplit into almoſt as many different Thoughts as there are *Expoſitors*: Nor can I ſay any has been ſo happy as light upon a Senſe which is not preſſed with unſurmountable Difficulties; it would therefore be the utmoſt Preſumption in me to pretend, either to judge which is the *beſt*, or to advance a *new one* different from all the *reſt*, more probable than *any* of them. The Reaſon I conceive why ſo many great Men have not only miſtaken one another, but many of them the Truth, is, Becauſe we have little or nothing in Scripture may give Light in the Caſe; any Alluſion to Scripture-thought has been neglected in the Heat of the Diſpute. I ſhall only for the Faſhion offer, 1. A few Preliminaries to the Inveſtigation of this Paſſage. 2. Enquire why this Name is in the *Hebrew* Tongue. 3. What is the Senſe of it.

I premiſe, 1. We muſt not think to meet with any Place that the *Hebrews* gave the Name *Armageddon* to; for, as far as I can ſee in Scripture (the ſureſt *Fountain* of the *Jewiſh Geography*) there is no Place comes under this Deſignation, this being the only Place in Scripture where we meet with the full Word. And to take it down in Parcels, as all do, is but an uncertain Way of reaching its Meaning.

2. The *Hebrews* uſed to give *Names* to Places from ſome extraordinary Emergent, and not to deſign the Event from the Place, as we commonly do. Thus *Bethel* had its Denomination from the Manifeſtations of God to *Jacob*; And *Bochim* had its Name from the great weeping of the *Iſraelites* there, *Judg.* ii. 5. And many others might be quoted to the ſame Purpoſe. Nor is it improbable this Name in *Hebrew* may be given to that Place after the Action, if there be a particular Field of Battle; and therefore it is in vain to ſeek it ſooner.

3. The Place, wherever it is, is to be a Field of Battle, and for the Execution of *God's Juſtice* upon his Enemies, which is evident from all ſaid on the *Vial*; and ſo this is no otherwiſe for the Advancement of the *Church*, than as her Enemies will be deſtroyed there: But I cannot ſee how their Converſion can be brought in, ſince it is expreſly deſtin'd for their Deſtruction. Theſe Things premiſed, I come to the next Queſtion,

Why this Name is here in *Hebrew*, eſpecially that the whole of the Prophecy is writen originally in *Greek*? There are abundance of Conjectures about this, but moſt of them have little Solidity. Some, who think the *Jews* are to be called under this Vial, make an Argument from this Word, becauſe it is *Hebrew*. The Weakneſs of this Fancy will preſently appear; for if, wherever we meet with an *Hebrew* Word in this Prophecy, the Scope of that Paſſage ſhould concern the Converſion of the *Jews* (for the Strength of the Reaſon muſt be here, or nowhere) then that Paſſage, *Chap.* ix. 11. *Whoſe Name in the* Hebrew *Tongue is* Abaddon, muſt relate to the ſame Thing, which yet none of the Learned ſay or plead; nor are they at the Pains to give any Reaſon why this Paſſage ſhould concern the *Jews* Converſion more than the other: And I think we may ſafely reject it here. Others tell us, It has an *Hebrew* Deſignation; becauſe that Language was the Mother-tongue of the Prophet. But this wants Confirmation, for pure *Hebrew* was very rare in that Age: Nay, we are aſſured by credible Authors, that it was nowhere a Mother-tongue long before Chriſt's Incarnation, but was mixed with *Syriack*, *Chaldaick*, and other Languages: But that this Apoſtle could readily both read and ſpeak *Hebrew* as well as *Greek*, is not to be doubted; for to be ſure he had, in common with all the other *Apoſtles*, the Gift of Tongues: But then this deſtroys their Deſign. Further, ſhould we allow this Word to drop from the Prophet, becauſe it was moſt natural to him to ſpeak his Mother-tongue, it would follow that the whole *Prophecy* ſhould have been in that *Language*; which however is falſe. The lateſt Opinion about this *Hebrew* Deſignation, is, They think the *Prophet* chooſeth this Word here, becauſe there is a Myſtery couched up in it, which he deſigned, by the Direction of the *Spirit of God*, to conceal from both the *Greeks* and *Latines*: But even this does not

not ſatisfy; for we have many other Myſteries in this Book, which have never yet been fully opened by either *Greeks* or *Latines*, tho' they be written in pure *Greek*. Again, tho' an *Hebrew* Word might puzzle ſome *Greeks* and *Latines*, Strangers to this Language; yet it could be no Myſtery to others acquainted with *Hebrew*, as we are ſure many ſuch have been ſince the Apoſtle's Time.

It turns now, we ſhould offer ſomething in Room of theſe rejected Senſes, which I own to be the hardeſt Task I have met with in all this Prophecy. We have many *Hebrew* Words in the New Teſtament, and I apprehend it would be an hard Pull to aſſign a Reaſon why they are uſed, particularly in this or that Place; Tho' I ſhall readily own, the Wiſdom of God never did any Thing without the beſt Reaſon. Only this I have to offer, That in moſt Caſes where *Hebrew* or *Syriack* Words occur, there is ſtill ſomething very remarkable and memorable in the Thing: So we find *James* and *John* deſigned *Boanerges*, *Sons of Thunder*, Mark iii. 17. And the Place where our Lord was crucified, was deſigned by an *Hebrew* Word, *Golgotha*, i. e. the Place of a Skull, *Matth.* xxvii. 23. When our Lord cured the deaf and dumb Man, he ſaid unto him, *Ephphatha*, *Be thou opened*, Mark vii. 34. And, that I may add no more, when our Lord raiſed *Jairus*'s Daughter from the Dead, he ſaid unto her, *Talitha cumi*, *which is, being interpreted, Damſel ariſe*, Mark v. 41. All theſe, and many others might be mentioned, do ſtill denote ſome memorable Thing. This may be one Reaſon, but if there be any others, or what they are, I find not how, with any Shadow of Reaſon, any Man can be poſitive; only I am pretty confident this will hold for ſo far.

The laſt Thing we are to enquire into, is, What is the Meaning of this *Hebrew* Word, *Armageddon*? If there were an *Interpretation* of the Word in the Text, as we commonly find where *Hebrew* Words occur, we might with more Certainty venture upon the Explication thereof: But that being wanting (certainly for holy Reaſons) we ought, with the more Caution, to inſtitute our Reſearches; eſpecially that Expoſitors have put this poor Word upon the Rack, till they have ſqueezed any Thing from it they pleaſed. Some think, when it is taken down by the Rules of *Etymology*, that it ſignifies *the Mountain of Delight*, becauſe *Antichriſt* being defeat, there will be a great Turning to the Lord. Others will have it to ſignify *the curſed Confederacy*, becauſe all the *Kings*, gathered together by the unclean *Spirits*, are curſed of God. Others make the Senſe of it to be *the Deſtruction of the high Mountain*, i. e. of *Rome*. Laſtly, ſome make the Meaning thereof to be *the Mountain of Judgment*: This they make out from the Fractions of the Word, as clearly as any of the reſt; and in my Opinion it is more agreeable to the Context. If we add a Scripture-alluſion to this, we may have the fairer View of it, tho' I will not undertake it is the true one meant here by the *Spirit of God*: And therefore ſome render it *the Mountain of* Megiddo, with Alluſion to that great and noted Victory obtained by *Barak* and *Deborah* over the Hoſt of *Jabin*, commanded by *Siſera*, at the Waters of *Megiddo*, Judg. iv. 5. This *Megiddo* lay upon the Frontiers of *Paleſtine*, there it was the *Canaanites* Yoke was broken from off the Neck of the *Iſraelites*: It was a moſt glorious Victory to the Lord's People, but moſt diſhonourable to the Hoſt of *Siſera*. The Matter will exactly anſwer here, but the Advantage will ſtill be greater upon the Side of the *Church*. But I dare purſue this no further, unleſs there was ſome ſurer Footing; only this ſeems unqueſtionable, that it will be a moſt terrible Day of the Lord's Vengeance upon his Enemies, and will open a great Door, and effectual, for the Growth and Increaſe of *Chriſt's Kingdom*.

The Difference betwixt this ſixth *Vial* and the ſixth *Trumpet*, mentioned, *Rev.* ix. 12, *&c.* is ſo very diſcernible, that they do not agree in any Thing, ſave that *Euphrates* and an *Army* is mentioned in both; but even in theſe the Odds is ſo great, that upon the moſt ſuperficial View we will be obliged to own, that the ſame Event is not the Meaning of both.

VIAL VII.

THIS *Vial* reaches to the Cloſe of the Chapter. It is owned by all, that this is the moſt obſcure of all the *Vials*: Nor have we that Scripture-light to direct us in the ſeveral Parts thereof, we have found in the reſt; and therefore it is no Wonder we find Expoſitors either ſplit into different Opinions, or ſome of them implicitely to follow others. Yet I cannot be brought to think there is nothing more in this *Vial* than the great Slaughter propheſied in the *ſixth*; for that would make two to be but one, contrary to the general Thought of all Expoſitors, who are of the Mind

the *Vials* are to be diſtinguiſhed from one another, not only in the Emblems, but in the Things thereby ſignified. Beſides, from what we have heard on the former *Vial*, it would appear, not only the *Gathering together of the Kings*, but the *Battle* itſelf is comprehended. This I own to be different from the Thoughts of ſome, who would have the *Rendezvouz* to belong to one *Vial*, and the *Engagement* to be the Subſtance of another. This ſeems to croſs the moſt common Notions of Military Mangement, in which it is never reckoned an Enemy is defeat, till there be a Foil given, which muſt conſiſt in more than the bare uniting of Forces, whether in one or mo Parts. As little can I think, that the laſt and general Judgment is here repreſented, tho' there be Mention made of the *Air*, which is the Place given in Scripture where the great *Judge* will appear, becauſe we are ſure *Satan* is to be bound upon the Back of this, as we read, *Chap.* xx. Neither will it help this Opinion, that the ſeven Vials are the laſt Plagues, and the ſeventh *Vial* is the laſt of theſe, by which *Antichriſt* is to fall; this they think is a Part of the *Day of Judgment*: For he is to fall at leaſt a thouſand Years before that come; and, after his Fall, the Church is to enjoy a very comfortable and happy State. Others think that *Satan's* Kingdom will be intirely deſtroyed under this Vial, and that it will fall immediately on DEVILS; becauſe *Satan* is called *The Prince of the Power of the Air*, Eph. ii. 2. I am ready to believe this is neareſt the Truth, yet the *Context* ſays, that more than *Devils* will feel the Smart of this Vial; for, *v.* 19. *The great City*, i. e. Babylon, *will be divided into three Parts*; which certainly reſpects God's Enemies on the Earth, conſiſting of Fleſh and Blood: Yet, if we underſtand by *Satan's* Kingdom *myſtical Babylon*, as we reaſonably may, the Senſe may be admitted. But a particular View of the ſeveral Parts of this *Vial* may give Light to the Whole; and ſo we keep to the former Method uſed in the other *Vials*.

17 And the ſeventh Angel poured out his Vial into the Air; and there came a great Voice out of the Temple of Heaven from the Throne, ſaying, It is done.

In this we have the Object, and Effect.

I. The Object, *The Air*. We had this Term, *Chap.* ix. 2. where it is ſaid, *The Air was darkned*. I own it is not eaſy to fix the Meaning of this Word, becauſe nowhere (ſo far as I find) is this Expreſſion uſed by any other of the *Prophets*, tho' it occur oft enough in other Places that are *hiſtorical*; But it is not ſafe to fetch the Senſe of it from them, becauſe they are certainly to be taken literally, which alſo many incline to do here, and thereby underſtand a moſt contagious *Peſtilence*: But how this can affect pure *Spirits*, I ſee not; which yet many think this *Judgment* has a ſpecial Driſt againſt. And beſides, the Peſt makes commonly no Difference; the People of God may be in as much Danger as their Enemies.

There are further all the Reaſons againſt the *literal* Acceptation of this, we gave againſt the *literal Senſe* of the other *ſix Vials*: Yet theſe who take this *figuratively*, are not agreed; for ſome thereby mean the *Religion* of *Babylon*, and ſay, The Senſe here is, it will by this *Vial* be intirely exploded. I have no Doubt but this will be true; yet I think it as true, that the *Principles of the Man of Sin* will be expoſed ſufficiently before this Time, as we heard above. In the *fifth Trumpet*, I hinted, that the Air ſeems to ſignify ſomething that is as neceſſary as common, and is naturally the common Bond or Tye of the Creatures, without which they could neither ſubſiſt, nor be united; and thought this might ſignify common Senſe and Reaſon: How far this may hold, or what more may be contained therein, a few Conſiderations may clear.

1. After that terrible *Defeat* under the *ſixth Vial*, theſe who remained unſlain of the Armies of the *Kings* of the *Earth*, which are to be gathered at *Armageddon*, will be ſcattered, and forced to flee where they beſt can: And, ſo forlorn will their Caſe be, they will have no Fortreſs, where they can betake themſelves to, nor Shift they can make for their own Safety, for Judgment will purſue faſter than they can flee; becauſe it is very probable the *Kings* of the *Eaſt* will follow out their Victory, and carry home the Stroke to the ſeveral Kingdoms which ſhall ariſe againſt the Church at that Time.

2. Several Kingdoms, belonging to theſe *Antichriſtian Kings*, may be, by the good Hand of God upon a clear Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, diſpoſed to a Revolt, and ſo join Iſſue with the *Kings of the Eaſt*, to oppoſe their idolatrous *Rulers*; therefore it is ſaid, *v.* 19. *The Cities of the Nations fell*: So that there will be no more Harbour for them at Home.

3. The

3. The *Air* is the common *Bond* of all Things, which being ſtruck at and cut in Pieces, all the Ties betwixt the Members of *myſtical Babylon* will be broken, and ſhe univerſally forſaken It appears this *Revolution* will be very general, and obtain in all Places; and ſo it is added, *v.* 20. *The Mountains*, i. e. Powers, *were not found.*

4. The *Air* is the Place, where Thunder, Lightning, Hail, *&c.* mentioned in the Conſequents of this Vial, are hatched; and ſo we muſt mean by *Air*, the Place where theſe Plagues ſignified by them are bred; and therefore I take the Senſe to be, there will at that Time be a very full Accompliſhment of that Prophecy, *All the Kingdoms of this World ſhall become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt.* And ſo they will throw off all theſe former Yokes, by which they had been bound to the *Dragon*, the *Beaſt*, or his *Image.*

5. If we will notice what Miſchief befel *Babylon*, by the former ſix *Vials*, it will be found nothing remained untouched by the juſt Judgments of God, but the Object here mentioned; for before the *Earth*, the *Sea*, and *Fountains* of Waters were ſmitten by the three firſt *Vials*; then the *Sun*, the *Seat* of the Beaſt, and the great *River*, an Emblem of all her Fences: So that this ſeventh *Vial* being the laſt of all, the laſt Plagues muſt be ſuppoſed to affect all untouched by the reſt; for this will be the finiſhing Stroke, after which there will not be another.

II. The Effect of this Vial more generally, and then ſpecified.

1. The general Account of the Effect, *There came a great Voice out of the Temple of Heaven, from the Throne.* The Parts of this are explained above, as, 1. That it is *a Voice*, i. e. diſtinct and articulate, on *Chap.* i. 12. 2. *A great Voice*, which ſhews the Strength and *Authority* of the *Speaker*, and that it will be obſervable: It is the ſame in Senſe with *loud*, ſee on *Chap.* xiv. 18. only here it may further point out the *Majeſty* of the Speaker. 3. It is ſaid *to come out of the Temple of Heaven.* This looks to be the ſame with what we had, *Chap.* xiv. 17. 'Tis true there is a Change of the Preposition, from ἐκ in the Quotation, to ἀπὸ here; yet I cannot think there is any Myſtery in this, and the rather it can be eaſily made out from the Scripture, that theſe two are uſed promiſcuouſly, and to the ſame Purpoſe: Many Inſtances are given. 4. It is ſaid *to come alſo from the Throne, the Seat of God*, as we heard, *Chap.* iv. 2. 'Tis then not to be doubted but it is the Voice of God, yea, and in Corroboration of the Voice of the *Church.*

2. The *Effect*, more particularly mentioned, or the Words ſpoken, *It is done*: We have the ſame Expreſſion, *Chap.* xxi. 6. where it is alſo ſaid, *v.* 5. that *it was the Voice of him that ſate on the Throne.* So that it was the Voice of God, the Speaker in both Places, but on different Occaſions, *there*, on the moſt perfect State of the Church; *here*, on the Defeat of her Enemies, in Order to that. It is owned in both Places, that the Speech is abrupt; tho' I cannot go in with theſe who would have this an Alluſion to *Dramatick* Performances, when, after a compleat Period is paſt, they uſed to cry out, *Acta eſt fabula*: For altho' there be many Cuſtoms borrowed by the Heathen from the Scripture, yet the *Spirit of God* was never at a Loſs how to inſtitute *Ordinances* without being beholden to the *Pagans*, whatever *Spencer* and others alledge to the contrary; however, Expoſitors are plainly ſplit about this, and that in general on two Accounts; as ſome,

(1.) Would have this ſhort Word to be *hiſtorical*, and to refer intirely to Matters paſt. I own, at firſt View this has much to plead for itſelf, eſpecially that it comes in upon the pouring out of the ſeventh Vial: Yet as to this, they are not all agreed; for ſome think it ſtrictly reſpects *Babylon*, and ſo the Meaning of it ought to be, *Babylon is gone.* This no doubt will be true, yea, and I own this to be a great Part of the Truth of the Prophecy; for, when the laſt *Vial* is poured out, there will be little of that great City remaining: Yet, becauſe the greateſt Part of the Execution ſeems plainly to follow, this cannot be the whole Senſe. Others again make a Collation betwixt the Creation and Deſtruction of the World; and form the Meaning thus, As by the Word of God all Things had their Being, *He ſpoke the Word, and it was done*; So here they think God ſpeaks the World again into its primitive State. This is yet harder; for upon the Back of this *Vial*, we are to expect the happy State of the *Church of Chriſt* upon Earth.

(2.) Others again make this a *prophetical* Expreſſion, and ſuch as notes the immediate Accompliſhment of the Thing, in order to which a great many Steps have been already made: There is indeed no Want of Scripture-Authority to ſupport this; for thus we have the Apoſtle ſpeaking, 2 *Tim.* iv. 7. *I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe*, &c. Yet it is certain the *Apoſtle* was then alive, and therefore it could not be intirely *hiſtorical*: And thus our Lord ſpeaks a little before his Crucifixion, *John* being the Relater, *John* xvii. 4. *I have finiſhed the Work thou gaveſt me to do*; Yet it was not accompliſhed, but it was next Door to it: This I take to be the Meaning here,

when this is added to our Lord's Words above, *Chap.* x. 7. *The Myſtery of God ſhall be finiſhed:* So that this ſeems to be the Remembrance of the Promiſe there made, *when the ſeventh Angel ſhould begin to ſound.* And now that he has ſounded, and ſix ſeveral Steps taken, he reminds the Church of his Promiſe, by this ſhort Speech, *It is done*; So that no more Vials were to be poured out: In ſhort, *Time ſhall be no longer.*

The Conſequents of this Vial are more obſcure than any of the reſt. About them we ſhall notice ſomething of terrible Majeſty, introductory thereto, *v.* 18. and then the Events themſelves.

18 And there were Voices, and Thunders, and Lightnings; and there was a great Earthquake, ſuch as was not ſince Men were upon the Earth, ſo mighty an Earthquake, and ſo great.

We have ſomething of a terrible Majeſty introductory of theſe Events, that follow in the next three Verſes: This we have in four Branches,

1. *There were Voices.* We had this before, *Chap.* iv. 5. and *Chap.* viii. 5. In both theſe Places, as well as in this, it is plainly meant of diſtinct and intelligible Voices, where no doubt there is an Alluſion to the *Promulgation* of the *Law.* Nor dare I condemn theſe learned Men who think this in a ſpecial Manner applicable to the *Miniſters* of the Goſpel, who certainly will imploy themſelves to the utmoſt to reclaim theſe that have wandered, and confirm theſe who may be wavering; this Exerciſe will be then moſt becoming their Character.

2. *Thunders.* This was alſo one of theſe ſolemn Concomitants at the *Promulgation* of the Law, which we conſidered before in the above-quoted Places. If we take this for Threatnings, I cannot ſay we will much miſtake; eſpecially, ſeeing the Terror of Divine Juſtice appears nowhere ſo lively, as in theſe Diſcoveries of his Averſion to Sin all along, and particularly in the laſt Execution of his Wrath.

3. *Lightnings.* Which we had in the above Places, and *Chap.* xi. 19. which are a Manifeſtation of God's holy Severity, before it come to the full Execution thereof; And theſe, when in Wrath, are deſigned by God both to *affright* and *blaſt*, which will no doubt be the Effect of the Goſpel at that Time, on theſe who had perverſly hardned their Hearts againſt God, to their own Ruin and Undoing.

4. An *Earthquake.* We ſhew'd, in the two laſt-quoted Texts, this is to be meant of Convulſions and Commotions: Here we have two Additions to increaſe the Import of the Expreſſion, 1. *Great, i. e.* moſt notable and obſervable; ſo that all the habitable World ſhall be ſinſible thereof. 2. Extraordinary, *ſuch as was not ſince Men were upon the Earth, ſo mighty an Earthquake and ſo great.* This aſſures us there will be ſuch Reelings and Confuſions in *Kingdoms* and *States* at the Fall of *Babylon*, as has not been ſince the Beginning of the World. We have a notable Prophecy to this Purpoſe, which was to take Place at the Coming of Chriſt in the Fleſh, or ſhortly after it, *i. e.* about the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, *Dan.* xii. 1. *There ſhall be a Time of Trouble, ſuch as never was ſince there was a Nation: And at that Time thy People ſhall be delivered and every one that ſhall be found written in the Book.* From which I think we may, ſafely conclude, that this Earthquake is not the immediate Forerunner of the Conſummation of all Things, tho' to be ſure it will be at the Overthrow of *Babylon.* Nor do I queſtion but that Prophecy of *Daniel* may ſtretch the Fulneſs of its Extent to theſe Times the Apoſtle *John* is ſpeaking of.

19 And the great City was divided into three Parts, and the Cities of the Nations fell; and great Babylon came in Remembrance before God, to give unto her the Cup of the Wine of the Fierceneſs of his Wrath.

20 And every Iſland fled away, and the Mountains were not found.

21 And there fell upon Men a great Hail out of Heaven, *every Stone* about the Weight of a Talent, and Men blaſphemed God becauſe of the Plague of the Hail, for the Plague thereof was exceeding great.

Here we have the main and principal Events of this *Vial*, which muſt be great, conſidering the *Solemnity* introduced the ſame. They are five in Number.

1. The

1. The *Schiſm* of *Babylon*, v. 19. *The great City was divided* [or made] *into three Parts.* What we are to mean by the *great City* here ſpoken of, will be eaſily found out from what was ſaid on *Chap* xi. 8. and *Chap.* xiv. 8. Babylon *that great City.* That it was *made* into three Parts, is the Effect of the *Earthquake* above-mentioned; for it is very ordinary for Earthquakes to ſhatter Houſes or Cities, which is a ſure Sign of their ruinous and tottering Condition. Nor do I ſee we need much demur about theſe *three Parts*, which the *Prophet* has inſiſted ſo much upon in the preceeding Part of this Book: For, as we heard, *myſtical Babylon* was compoſed of the Kingdoms of the *Dragon*, the *Beaſt* and his *Image*; No doubt it will be reſolved in theſe three again at the laſt, only with this notable Difference, that tho' their Intereſts never united ſo much in Affection, as Deſign and Endeavours againſt the *Church* of God, now they will be entirely ſplit in all their Counſels and Maxims. They were reconciled in a great Meaſure under the ſixth *Vial*: But being fearfully defeat then in their Expedition againſt the *Kings of the Eaſt*, they will fall into Diſorder and Confuſions amongſt themſelves, and it is probable will wreck their Spite againſt other; and thus *Babel's* Curſe of old will at Length fall to *Babylon's* Share. This will make for the Undoing of the whole Body; for *a City divided againſt itſelf cannot ſtand.* This Senſe is ſo eaſy, and ſo agreeable to what was delivered above, I need not advance any Thing in its Vindication, and as little in Confutation of the other Opinions, the moſt notable whereof own, this Diviſion is to be according to the Number of the *Dragon* and *two Beaſts*, or, which is the ſame, according to the *three unclean Spirits* which come out of their Mouths. Some flee to the old Whim of a *perfect Number*, tho' they be here obliged to apply it to the moſt imperfect Thing in the World, *Babylon*, and at her moſt imperfect State; The reſt are intirely ſtrain'd, and their Authors are much ſtraitned to make them Senſe.

2. The joint Ruin of their Adherents, *v.* 19. *The Cities of the Nations fell.* They ſeem to be idle Thoughts, who would have theſe Cities be *Hanſe or Imperial Towns*; and as weak, who by them underſtand the *Capital Cities* of the Northern Nations: Others carry them to *Italy*. In ſhort, we are not to doubt but theſe are the Nations whoſe *Kings* were deluded by the unclean *Spirits* to aſſemble at *Armageddon*: And that now they are defeat, their own Lands ſpues them out. By *Cities* we are to mean their States, Courts, or Governments; or in ſhort every Thing that uſed to ſtrengthen theſe *Kings* Hands were now quite alienated from them, or unable to ſupport them. Some alledge, there will be Revolutions in theſe Nations, and they will throw off the Yoke of the *Beaſt* and his *Image*, and model themſelves into *Chriſtian Kingdoms*: But it would appear that all theſe who ſtood for the Intereſt of *Babylon*, were to fall with her under this *Vial*; which indeed ſeems by far to be the more eligible Senſe of the Words.

3. The final Ruin and utter Extirpation of *Babylon*, *Great* Babylon *came in Remembrance before God, to give unto her the Cup*, &c. The City was but *divided* before, but now is to be *deſtroyed*; for commonly *Deſtruction* follows *Diviſion*. No doubt it was ſore waſted by the former Judgments, yet a Stump thereof remain'd, and that will be rooted out under this *Vial*. That it is ſaid, Babylon *came in Remembrance before God*, is an Expreſſion after the Manner of Man; for God is not capable of forgetting any Thing: Yet we find this Phraſe often uſed of God, both as to *Mercy* and *Judgment*. So it is ſaid of *Cornelius*, Acts x. 4. *Thy Prayers and thy Alms are come up for a Memorial before God*: Not as if God had not regarded him or them before; but that now he was to notice them in a very eminent Manner, and give a Diſcovery thereof for his Good. After the ſame Manner it is ſpoke of God in the Exerciſe of his Juſtice, *Hoſ.* viii. 13. *Now will he remember their Iniquity, and viſite their Sins.* Two Things ſeem to be here, 1. That *Babylon's* Sin will be fully ripe for Judgment. 2. That the ſet Time for her Deſtruction is alſo come, *i. e.* the One thouſand two' hundred and ſixty Years will by this Time be fully expired. As for the ſeveral Expreſſions, we had Occaſion to conſider them formerly, *Chap.* xiv. 10. *Chap.* xv. 1. *Chap.* xvi. 1.

4. The failing of all Refuge, *v.* 20. *Every Iſland fled away, and the Mountains were not found.* We had theſe Expreſſions before, *Chap.* vi. 14. where I explained them from Scripture: If that hit, we may believe that the Remains of *Babylon* will not find any Shelter in the *Continent* or the *Iſlands* of the Sea: For, as *Mountains* are the ordinary Places of Fortreſſes by Land, ſo are the *Iſles* by Sea, whether they be fix'd, or floating as Ships: So that her Condition will be more deſperate. Another Thought occurs, We may mean *Aſia* by *Mountains*, becauſe the greateſt in the World are thought to be there; And by Iſlands, *Europe* and *America*, becauſe the greateſt Store of them are in theſe Quarters of the World: But we have a prophetical Expreſſion will clear this to be a very miſerable Condition, *Amos* ix. 3. *Though they hide themſelves in the Top of* Carmel, *I will ſearch and take them out thence; and though they hide from my Sight in the Bottom of the Sea, thence will I command the Serpent, and he ſhall bite them.*

them. But on no Account can I ſee how the Comments of ſome learned Men will hold here, who underſtand this of the removing of Obſtructions that ſtand in the Way of the *Goſpel*, ſeeing it is plain all this while the *Apoſtle* is ſpeaking of the final Deſtruction of *Babylon*, and not one Word concerning the *Kingdom* of *Chriſt* its Proſperity, further than what flows immediately from the Slaughter of its Enemies; and therefore in this Senſe it is to be taken.

5. The After-miſery of *Babylon*, while thus expoſed and purſued without any Place of Retreat, *v.* 21. This is repreſented by a *Shower of Hail* of an extraordinary Nature. It ſeems to allude to one of the *Plagues* of *Egypt*, Exod. ix. 23. where it was extraordinary too; for it is ſaid, *v.* 27. *There was none like it in all the Land of* Egypt *before.* Yea, ſo grievous was this Plague, that it brought *Pharaoh* to his Confeſſions: But that was nothing to this, if we conſider the Weight of the Hailſtones, *about the Weight of a Talent*, that is, near an *Hundred Pound Weight*, at leaſt *Six Stone* and *two Pound of our ordinary Weight.* Again, whence it came, *from Heaven*, *i. e.* from a great Height, which will make them the heavier. Their Direction is alſo to be noticed, *They fell upon Men.* I enquired, on *Chap.* viii. 7. into the Senſe of this Expreſſion, which may hold here, allowing this *Plague* to be greater than the former. Expoſitors debate here, whether in this Place it be an Emblem of Hell: If it be not, it ſeems to be the immediate Forerunner thereof, if we compare with this the 20th Verſe of Chapter xix. And the rather that we find the Nature of their Exerciſe in the next Clauſe, *And Men blaſphemed God becauſe of the Plague of the Hail.* We had Expreſſions equivalent to this, *v.* 9. It is evident, that *ſpiritual Egypt* will be worſe than *literal*; for we heard of *Pharaoh*'s Confeſſions, but here of *Babylon*'s deſperate Blaſphemy.

From all that has been advanced on theſe ſeven Vials, it ſeems plain the Thoughts of the learned Mr. *Marck* will not hold, that theſe Judgments have been all of them at leaſt partially execute againſt *Babylon*, and that there is no Order of Succeſſion of one to another: For it is evident, they are to be the laſt of all the Plagues upon *Antichriſt*, and that each of them will be moſt remarkable. To be ſure, the Execution of the Judgments written in them, will be the moſt lively Commentary; And we are to live in the Faith they ſhall certainly come to paſs.

CHAP. XVII.

GOD was pleaſed to reveal the Fall of *Babylon* by Seven ſeveral Steps, in the preceeding Chapter; but the Emblems are obſcure, as moſt of the other Scripture-prophecies, and but ſhortly inſiſted on, which makes them the more dark, whereby the Impreſſion would be the weaker: And therefore the *Spirit*, in this and the two following Chapters, enlarges upon theſe *Vials* after the ſame Manner that the *Seven Seals* were above illuſtrated. Yet, even in this Amplification, we have Abundance of very obſcure Paſſages: Only we may conclude, the Doubling of the Viſion makes the Interpretation ſure. Nor are we to expect the Explication to anſwer every Part of the Viſion of the Vials: But what was leaſt inſiſted on in them is the more cleared in theſe Chapters.

This Chapter ſeems to be a ſhort Compend of the Whole. As in Chapter xi. we had the Hiſtory of the Church, under the Riſe, Reign, and Decay of *Babylon*; ſo here we have the State of *Antichriſt* before, under, and after the Vials. If we carry not this Conſideration with us, I ſee not how we can make Senſe thereof; but, allowing this, the Difficulty will be the leſs. The following two Chapters do pointedly go thorow all the Vials in Order.

In this Chapter, we have the Grounds of God's Controverſy with *Babylon*, in order to juſtify his Procedure therein accounted for. The Deſign of this ſeems to be twofold; 1. To render *Antichriſt* inexcuſable, under the Execution of the laſt Plagues; for nothing more vindicates the Equity of a Sentence, than the Truth and Juſtice of its Grounds, which prevents all reclaiming. 2. To give us a beautiful Scheme of the Providence of God from firſt to laſt in Favours of his Church, and againſt his and her Enemies. This alſo may be taken as a *loud Call* to his People, to ſeparate themſelves from *Babylon*, ſeeing the Sentence againſt her will be as juſt, as the Judgment heavy and ruining, which we have alſo in this Chapter: Where I ſhall notice, 1. An introductory Communing betwixt an Angel and the Prophet, in order to engage his Attention, when the Emblems ſhould be diſcovered; this, *v.* 1, 2. 2. The Viſion itſelf, in the reſt of the Chapter.

AND

1 AND there came one of the ſeven Angels which had the ſeven Vials, and talked with me, ſaying unto me, Come hither, I will ſhew unto thee the Judgment of the great Whore, that ſitteth upon many Waters:

2 With whom the Kings of the Earth have committed Fornication, and the Inhabiters of the Earth have been made drunk with the Wine of her Fornication.

Here we have, 1. The Apoſtle's Collocutor, 2. His Speech.

I. The *Collocutor*; about whom we have to note, 1. His Perſon. 2. His Acts.

1. As to the Perſon, *One of the ſeven Angels which had the ſeven Vials.* That it was really an heavenly *Angel* imployed of God in this Viſion, I have often owned; and that, in theſe Acts they did, they were Emblems of theſe Inſtruments God will employ in the Accompliſhment of the Prophecy, I have alſo proven. Now, that here one of them is ſent to inform the *Prophet* of the Meaning of theſe *Viſions* he was formerly bleſt with the Sight of, is very eaſy to conceive, nor need we flee to *Myſteries* in this Preamble. It is true, there are ſeveral Things ſaid of this Angel; but, I think, we cannot make much of them.

(1.) He is called *One of the Seven*, of whom we read, *Chap.* xvi. and ſome ſay, he was the firſt mentioned, *v.* 2. who poured out his Vial on the *Earth*. Should we allow all this, I ſee not what could follow: Nor do I ſee this Angel's Part in this Viſion to bear any Proportion with the Juſtice of God expreſſed in the *firſt Vial*, but is here ſent to declare the Juſtice of God in the Judgment of *Babylon*, and to give a compendious Account thereof, which any of the other Six might have done as well as he, had it pleaſed God. Tho' the Word is ſometimes, even in this *Prophecy*, is taken ordinarily; yet ſtill we found *ſecond*, *third*, &c. follow, which is not here; and therefore we may take it for any of the *Seven*, provided we ſtill underſtand it of *one* of them. If any ſhall enquire, Why then does *John* remark ſo particularly, that he was one of the Seven, if there be no Myſtery in it? I anſwer, That he might ſatisfy us, the Viſion in all its Parts was ſo convincingly plain, that he could remember the Parties concerned; and that this was one of the *Seven* he had ſeen with the Cups of God's Wrath: Nay, and (tho' it be not ſaid) that Angel might have the Cup in his Hand, after he had emptied it; for, tho' it be ſaid they poured out the *Vials*, it is not ſaid they threw away the *Vials* afterwards. Which ſeems not to be obſcurely inſinuate in the

(2.) *Which had the ſeven Vials*: For this Clauſe may be well rendered participially, *Having the ſeven Vials*; which is yet plainer, that it is not added *full of the Wrath of God*, becauſe, 'tis reaſonably ſuppoſed, they were emptied before, as we read in the preceeding Chapter. And, who ſhould be fitter to inſtruct in the Viſion, than one imployed in the Manifeſtation thereof?

2. The Angel's *Acts*, introductory alſo to the Viſion. Where,

(1.) His Motion, *He came.* To be ſure theſe ſeven Angels had before their ſeveral Motions from the *Temple*, as we read, *Chap.* xv. 6. with their *Vials*; and ſome went to one Place, and ſome to another, as they were directed, and all of them at ſome ſmall Diſtance from *John*, elſe he could not have ſo pointedly obſerved the Tranſactions of every one of them; and conſequently this *One* (whether firſt or laſt, is no Matter) came from the Part he was directed to, moving towards *John*, in order to deliver his Commiſſion, which, I think, is all in Reaſon we can make of this March of the *Angel*; and conſequently, it is no ſignificative Part of the *Viſion*, but only a remarkable Circumſtance, noted in the Viſion, to gain the greater Credit with us, from the Prophet's immediate View of it all.

(2.) The Manner of the *Angel's* Addreſs to *John*, *He talked with me*; this in general, and is to be oppoſed to, at leaſt diſtinguiſhed from, the terrible Voices he heard in the laſt Vial; for we read nothing of *John's* Fear and Amazement, as elſewhere: So that this *Angel* did approach *John* in a very friendly and obliging Manner, as one obſerves, *He converſed with him as one Friend does with another.* But, whether any Converſation paſt, but what is here recorded, would be raſh to determine, eſpecially that it is added immediately, *He ſaid unto me*; which inſinuates, theſe were the firſt Words uttered by the *Angel*, in the next Clauſe, *Come hither*: Which ſays, as the *Angel* had made ſome Motion towards *John*, ſo he encourages him to move towards the *Angel*. He had ſuch an encouraging Call, *Chap.* iv. 1.

II. The *Angel's* Speech to *John*, *I will ſhew thee the Judgment*, &c. This is indeed the Subſtance of the whole Viſion, which, becauſe advanced ſo abruptly, has

moved ſome to think it has Reſpect to ſomething before manifeſted to *John*, in ſome preceeding Part of the *Prophecy*; and ſo they would make this *Whore* to be *Jezabel*, mentioned, *Chap.* ii. 20. in the Epiſtle to *Thyatira*. Others think this Whore to be a new Emblem of what was deſigned a *City*, or *Babylon* before, *Chap.* xiv. 8. We will find this to hold from *v.* 18. of this Chapter; yet for all this I ſee no Need to ſuppoſe this Emblem to be known to *John* till *v.* 3. but the Angel might ſpeak of her after this Manner, becauſe *John* was immediately to ſee her; he might further deſign to excite his Attention, and prepare him for the Manifeſtation, which he ſaid, *I will ſhew unto thee.* We had the ſame Expreſſion, *Chap.* iv. 1. This Word is variouſly rendered; as ſometimes it ſignifies to *teach*, 1 Cor. xii. 31. *I will ſhew you unto you a more excellent Way*; i. e. I will teach you. Sometimes to *diſcover* ſome wonderful Thing, *John* ii. 18. *What Sign ſheweſt thou unto us?* At other Times, it ſignifies to foretel, *Mat.* xvi. 21. *From that Time Jeſus began to ſhew unto his Diſciples, how he muſt go unto* Jeruſalem, *&c.* It would be vain to enquire, which of theſe Meanings is moſt appoſite here, ſeeing all the three muſt conſpire to make up one full Senſe, as we ſhall ſee in the Sequel; for we have both wonderful Types, and an Explication thereof; and added to all, it is a Prophecy ſome Thouſands of Years before the Accompliſhment thereof. We have here further to view, 1. The Emblem to be ſeen. 2 The Fate thereof. 3. The Amplification of the firſt, which may be the Ground of the Judgment.

1. The Emblem, *The great Whore*, &c. where we have to view,

(1.) The Nature of this Emblem, *The Whore*; expreſſed by Way of Eminency, as if there were not another, or (which is certainly true) another like her. The Word πόρνη ſignifies properly a Whore that proſtitutes her Body for Gain, and ſo it has two ſad conſtituent Parts, *Uncleanneſs* and *Coveteouſneſs*. Some tell us, This Word ſtrictly reſpects the *Treachery* of a *married Woman*, and hence they infer the Faithleſneſs of the Church of *Rome*. I ſhall be very ready to yield the Defection of that Church, and that now *Rome* Antichriſtian is a Part of that unclean Emblem; but, that ſhe ſhould be all the Driſt of the *Prophecy* and *Viſion*, I cannot grant; as if the *Bride* the *Lamb's Wife* had no other Adverſary but the *Papal* Intereſt, which is, however, all theſe Expoſitors drive at. Beſides, the Foundation they lay is too weak to ſupport the Superſtructure they build upon it: For, tho' it be true, that this Word both in the Abſtract and Concrete does ſometimes plainly ſignify Adultery, *Mat.* v. 32. *As if a Man ſhall put away his Wife, ſaving for the Cauſe of Fornication*, &c. Yet it is evident this will not juſtify the Notion; for we have the ſame Word uſed to expreſs what we commonly mean thereby, and ſo it is oppoſed to, at leaſt diſtinguiſhed from Adultery, *Gal.* v. 19. Therefore we may more reaſonably infer from the Uſe of the Word, that ſeeing it is promiſcuouſly advanced, to expreſs the Treachery of a married Woman, or the Incontinency of an unmarried One; We may allow it to ſignify both in this Text: Tho', in the mean Time, if we would ſpeak properly of *Rome* Heathen, Chriſtian and Antichriſtian, I think it will have different Significations, and may be called a Whore in the firſt and laſt, and only a married Woman in the ſecond Senſe: They have nothing in common but the bare Name.

I preſume, none thinks this Part of the Prophecy is to be underſtood literally, and therefore this Whore muſt have a *Myſtical* or *Spiritual* Signification, which was proven on *Chap.* xiv. 8. And ſeeing by *Fornication*, in a *prophetick* Senſe, we are to underſtand *Idolatry*; then, by *Whores*, and *Fornicators*, we muſt mean *Idolaters*: And ſo the Scripture makes it, *Iſa.* i. 21. *How is the faithful City become an Harlot?* Hoſ. i. 2. *For the Land hath committed great Whoredom in departing from the Lord.* And *Idolaters* are called *the Children of Whoredoms*, Hoſ. ii. 4. From the whole, I conclude, all Sorts of Idolatry are wrapt up in this Term, and may therefore well extend to *Heathens* and *Mahometans*, as much as to *Papiſts*. That all the three are *Idolaters* in the moſt proper Senſe, I have proved before, on *Chap.* xii. and xiii. and conſequently, as all the three are contained under *Babylon*, *Egypt*, &c. ſo muſt they all be comprehended under this Term of a *Whore*. Yet ſtill ſomething remains in this Word not yet expreſt, which I ſhall give in theſe Particulars; 1. That the Word *Whore* has the Notion of a Woman that has ſomething of *Delicateneſs*, which may take with *the ſimple One void of Underſtanding*, as *Solomon* aſſures us is moſt familiar with Women of the leaſt Modeſty. This, in a moſt eminent Manner, is verified in all the three, from the Pomp, Paint, *&c.* whereby they uſe to gain Votaries. 2. By the Term *Whore*, we are to mean *Impudence*; for Chaſtity and Shamefacedneſs go together, and when the one is wreck'd, the other is preſently over: Therefore we read ſo often of a *Whore's Forehead*, incapable of a Bluſh; this is alſo moſt familiar to them: Even a modeſt Naturaliſt would be aſhamed to own the Principles and Practices found among all the three. 3. By *Whore*, we commonly underſtand *Diſingenuity*, and enſnaring Falſhood.

ſhood. It is needleſs to reſume what is ſaid of them above in the proper Places; the *Faith* of a *Whore* is Infidelity to the Height, and that by a Proverb. 4. *Uncleanneſs* of Nature, and here to be oppoſed to *Goſpel-holineſs*. This is as true as any of the reſt, as was proven on *Chap.* xvi. 13. 5. *Greed*, or *Covetouſneſs*, as was evicted from the Force of the Word, and holds from the Nature of the Thing. Other Particulars might be added, but a Regard to Modeſty forbids the Naming of them.

(2.) The Quality of this Whore, *Great*: We had this Adjunct often before applied to *Babylon*, Chap. xiv. 8. Chap. xvi. 19. To all which I only add this Reflection, When wicked Things are *mean*, they become the moſt contemptible Objects imaginable: But, when there is an Air of *Greatneſs*, to cover their intrinſick Filth, we then, for the Sake of *apparent* Greatneſs, diſſemble our Reſentments againſt the *real* Evil, which flows from our intoxicate Judgments, and not from the Nature of the Thing. Thus we abominate a little Thief, and our Natures ſtart at the Thought of him; yet we can in our Hearts magnify, yea, envy the powerful Oppreſſor, as if a Sin by its Greatneſs ſhould be leſſened. So, little Robbers, who ſteal but a ſmall Part of our Subſtance, muſt be hanged; but great Ones we are ready to commend, as *Alexander* the *Grecian* is called *Great* in all Hiſtories, tho' he was, in Truth, the greateſt Cut-throat and Robber that ever the Sun ſhined on.

(3.) The State of this Whore, *That ſitteth upon many Waters.* Where her Place, *Many Waters*; this is interpreted by the Angel, *v.* 15. of *Peoples, Multitudes, Nations and Tongues*, beyond which we may not ſeek; this ſhows us an *extenſive Empire*, which is certainly true of this myſtical *Babylon*. Next her *Poſture, Sitting*; which denoteth Power, and the Continuance of it with Eaſe and Security, as on *Chap.* iii. 21. While both are put together, they exactly deſcribe the Affinity betwixt literal and myſtical *Babylon*, Jer. li. 13. *Babylon, O thou that dwelleſt upon many Waters.* No doubt, God, in his holy Sovereignty, ſuffered the one to grow to ſuch a Height, as for other Reaſons, ſo alſo for this, that that proud Empire might be a true Type of this *Spiritual Babylon*: And ſo this *Whore* is the Emblem of a *great Power*, that oppoſeth itſelf to, and exalteth itſelf above the Kingdom of *our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and can be underſtood of none elſe but that threefold Power we before heard to be comprehended in *Babylon*.

2. The Fate of this Whore, expreſſed by one Word, *Judgment*, κρῖμα; about which there is no ſmall Struggle amongſt the Learned, not only in this, but in other Places of Scripture. That I may wave all Reſearches of this Nature, I hope it is granted on all Hands, that this one Word is comprehenſive of all in theſe three Chapters: The Reaſon of this is, becauſe all in them either give us an Account of the *Demerit* of this *Whore*, or of the *ſeveral Steps* of God's Juſtice againſt her, and we have no other Word in all this Introduction to point out theſe; ſo that, if this do it not, we will not be able to reconcile the Angel's Promiſe in this Place, and the following Viſion: Nor will Fetches from the *Hebrew* and other Languages ſerve the Turn here, for theſe lead quite away from the Scope of the Place; and therefore I take theſe Things to be contain'd in the Word, 1. Guilt; this we find loudly, *v.* 6. *She is drunk with the Blood of the Saints*: This may be thought an uncouth Meaning of the Word *Judgment*, if it be not confirmed by Scripture, which we have plainly, *Rom.* v. 16. *The Judgment was by one to Condemnation.* Where, it is plain, κρῖμα is not taken for the Sentence, but for the Ground of the Sentence: And indeed, it is generally owned to ſignify ſo in that Place, and 1 *Tim.* v. 1. *Having Damnation, becauſe they left their firſt Love*: Where the Word rendered *Damnation* is the ſame as in our Text, and ſignifies Guilt. 2. It ſignifies temporal Judgments, eſpecially deſtructive; this we have fully in the Cloſe of this Chapter, and whole of the next: So alſo we have the Word uſed elſewhere; the one Thief ſays to the other, *Luke* xxiii. 4. *Doſt thou not fear God, ſeeing thou art in the ſame Condemnation?* 3. It ſignifies eternal Wrath, 2 *Tim.* iii. 6. *Leſt he fall into the Condemnation of the Devil.* Nor do I ſee how this Word can be taken in any other Senſe here, but all the three; tho' ſome by this mean no more but a View of the Opinion or Judgment will be made of this Whore, which comes very far ſhort of the Truth.

3. The Amplification of the Character of this Emblem, *v.* 2. which gives, as the Truth of the Character, *Whore*, ſo the Juſtice of her *Puniſhment*, taken from the Nature of theſe in Communion with her; which we have in two very comprehenſive Generals, equal to an Univerſal.

(1.) Is of Kings and ſovereign Powers, *With whom the Kings of the Earth have committed Fornication.* Theſe, with Alluſion to the Character of a Whore, are ſaid to *commit Fornication*, i. e. as was proven before, were conjunct Idolaters with her.

The Phraſe points out, 1. Their Guilt, *Uncleanneſs*, i. e. ſpiritual Whoredom. 2. Their *Inclinations* to the Thing; it was not by Conſtraint, but a voluntary Deed, which brings it up to the Height of a *preſumptuous Sin*. 3. The *Satisfaction* they had in it, all which aggravates their Guilt.

(2.) All others; *The Inhabiters of the Earth have been made drunk*, &c. This muſt comprehend all other Ranks: There is this peculiar here, they are ſaid to be *drunk with the Wine of*, &c. The Senſe of the Words we had on *Chap.* xiv. 8. here I only notice the Riſe of the Expreſſion, from the Increaſe of her Followers: The Great Ones were bewitched with her Sorceries, the Under-ſort having not only the ſame Temptation with their Princes, but (which much encouraged them) the godleſs Example of their Rulers; upon which they laid aſide all Thought and Reaſon, and went on in theſe ſinful Courſes, without Remorſe, as well as Check; becauſe at the ſame Time they obeyed their Commanders, they alſo gratified their own Luſts and Corruption. It was no Wonder all this ſhould ſufficiently prepare *John* for the Viſion he was to have in the following Verſe; and that, having heard ſo much of the Whore, he ſhould be moſt attentive to the *Judgment* was to be ſhewed of her.

From the Whole, I only obſerve, That it is the greateſt Curſe ever a People met with, to have *idolatrous Rulers* over them; for Princes given to their Luſts, preſently betray the Subjects to the ſame Sins, into which they ruſh with a wild and brutal Inconſiderateneſs, here repreſented by *Drunkenneſs*.

VISION IV.

HERE we have the Prophet brought to a new Theatre, a Wilderneſs, where he met with all the Viſions mentioned to the 10. *v.* of *Chap.* xxi. The Partition of the three Chapters was given at the Beginning of this; that of the reſt is found, *Chap.* xx.

We have in this Chapter, 1. A Viſion, to *v.* 7. 2. The Explication of the Viſion, to the Cloſe. The Viſion is of a Beaſt and his Rider; the firſt, *v.* 3. the next in the following three.

3 So he carried me away in the Spirit into the Wilderneſs: And I ſaw a Woman ſit upon a ſcarlet coloured Beaſt, full of Names of Blaſphemy, having ſeven Heads and ten Horns.

There are three previous Circumſtances to be conſidered before we enter upon the Viſions themſelves;

1. The Place, *A Deſert*. He had been all the while of the third Viſion on the Sea-ſhore; but when this Repreſentation is to be made to him, he is brought to the *Wilderneſs*. Why God was pleaſed to change the *Theatre*, ought not to be curiouſly enquired after. Some tell us, It was for the *Prophet*'s Advantage, that in that lonely Place he might have a clearer Diſcovery of the *Viſions*, which could not be expected in a Place of Reſort: But I think this ſhould not be allowed, for this would be to derogate from his Evidence of the former Viſions, becauſe not in a Wilderneſs; yet to be ſure the Diſcovery he had, whether in *Heaven* or on the *Sea-ſhore*, were equally clear with this. But the great Deſign of *Papiſts*, in countenancing this Thought, is becauſe it ſeems to plead for an *Hermetical* (which they call a Contemplative) *Life*: However it is known, that theſe Retirements are but the removing themſelves from the World, that they may with the leſs Suſpicion wallow in all Manner of Intemperance, and not to promote a godly Life, as they give it out. Beſides, ſuch a recluſe Life is not for Edification, becauſe there they can be little, if at all, ſerviceable either to the Church or the World; ſo that there is too much Truth in what One ſays of them, *They ſerve their own Bellies, and not the Lord Chriſt*. We need not be anxious about any Reaſon for this Change, or be content with this, till a better offer. It may be a Piece of Divine Condeſcenſion to our Prophet, to whet his Attention the more by the Change of the Place, as we find in the Caſe of the Prophet *Ezekiel*, in the eighth Chapter of his Prophecy.

As for any Myſtery in the Word *Deſert*, one would deſire more Ground than any Thing yet advanced, before they go in to their Opinion. Some do alledge it reſpects the *Woman* after-mentioned, and tell us, She is in a Deſert, becauſe formerly theſe Parts of the World were occupied by the true Church, but now ſucceeded by *Antichriſt*.

Tho'

Tho' this ſeems to look well, yet it is plain this Woman is in no Wilderneſs-condition, for both the *Pope* and *Mahomet* are poſſeſſed of the beſt Spots in the World; but if it muſt have any Meaning, we may ſafely refer it to the barren Condition of theſe Dominions belonging to *Antichriſt*, as to the Fruits of true Religion and Godlineſs. Otherwiſe this Woman is called a *City* in the Cloſe of the Chapter, which is a Place of great Reſort.

2. The Prophet's Diſpoſition; *He was in the Spirit*; of which, ſee on *Chap.* i. 10. *Chap.* iv. 2. It may be enquired, Whether this does not point out the Continuance of that ſupernatural Frame, and ſo import an uninterrupted Rapture or Extaſy? Which in Reaſon we are to think was not ſhort, ſeeing he had the Diſcovery of ſo many Prodigies in ſuch an accurate Manner. And it may be added, to ſatisfy us, The Authority of this *Viſion* is no leſs genuine than that of the former ones. I cannot be ſo poſitive as ſome, to aſſert all this Revelation was made to *John* in the Space of one *Lord's Day*: I own it is poſſible, but it is not very probable, eſpecially that there was an Interruption of this Diſpoſition, as we ſee, *Chap.* iv. 2.

3. The Way and Manner how he came to this Place, *He*, i. e. the *Angel*, *carried me*. As for the Force of the Word either here or elſewhere, I cannot ſay it imports any Violence, for it might be done in a very eaſy and pleaſant Way, which ſeems fitteſt to preſerve the Diſpoſition above-explained: Only I ſee not how we can refuſe, that whatever was the Way of Tranſportation from the Sand, *John* was paſſive in the Thing, as well as *Paul* was *when he was taken up*, 2 Cor. xii. 2. This Carriage was undoubtedly the Work of the *Angel*; but I ſee not how we can aſcribe the extraordinary Frame *John* was in to the *Angel* alſo: It ſeems more juſt to aſcribe it to God; for it requires no leſs than an Infinite Efficacy, which no Creature is capable of.

We are now to conſider the firſt of theſe Emblems, *viz.* the Beaſt upon which the Woman ſat. It is deſcribed in the Text by ſeveral Particulars, yet none of them ſeparately, nor all of them together, can bring to know the Kind thereof, becauſe it was a Monſter, and therefore of no Kind. As for the general Deſcription of it, under the Notion of a Beaſt, we explained it above, *Chap.* xi. 7. and *Chap.* xiii. 1. and proved from Scripture, that prophetically it ſignifies an Empire or great Kingdom. For the reſt, we ſhall view the ſeveral Characters of this wild Beaſt;

1. From its Colour, *Scarlet coloured*, κόκκινος. We find the Word ſo rendered, *Mat.* xxvii. 28. *They put on him a Scarlet Robe*: But ſome think it ſhould be turned *Purpure*; The Reaſon is, becauſe it comes from κόκκος, which, tho' it indifferently ſignifies any ſmall Grain, as we find our Lord uſe it, *Matth.* xvii. 2. *A Grain of Muſtard*; and, *John* xii. 24. *A Grain of Wheat*; yet it is obſerved, that this is always done when it is added to ſome other Word, which diſtinguiſheth the Kind. But the Learned ſay, While it is read *abſolutely*, it always ſignifies a ſmall Grain they dye withall, and grows like the Seed of Roſes in the Heart of a Flower: They add, that the beſt in the World is found about *Tyre*, at the Bottom of the *Streights*, and that therefore the *Tyrian Purple* is the fineſt. It differs much in Colour from our common *Purple*, and is nearer to that of *Scarlet*, but much more glorious than either. It was the uſual Royal Robe, and not worn by others; even the ſmaller Princes of the Eaſt had but a Part of their Robes of this fine Cloth. Now, from this Account of the Colour, I think it plain enough, ſeveral Senſes of this Piece of the Emblem may be rejected: As of thoſe who make the Colour an Emblem of *Cruelty*, tho' I yield the Power repreſented by this is cruel to the greateſt Pitch; and therefore we read, *The Woman was drunk with the Blood of the Saints*, v. 6. but that belongs not immediately to the Beaſt, but to the Woman that ſits thereon. Again, that other Thought, That it is an Emblem of *Hypocriſy*, as if it feigned to be waſhed in the Blood of Lamb; for we read above, they were *white* who were ſo waſhed. Nor can they, from any Text of Scripture, juſtify this Senſe, that Purple or Scarlet Colour is a Type of *Hypocriſy*; It is plainly, from the Nature of the Thing, a Badge of *Sovereignty*. Nor will it mend the Matter, to ſay, The *Dragon* was *red*, and that Colour is an Emblem of Cruelty; for they are different Words: The Senſe of the *Dragon's* Colour we gave, *Chap.* xii. 2. But they ſeem to be much nearer the Truth, who by *Scarlet* underſtand Guilt, and *great Guilt*; for great Sins are ſaid to be of a *Scarlet Colour*, as was ſhewed on *Chap.* vi. 4. And ſo, if the two be added, it may give a pretty full Senſe that this Colour is the Emblem of a ſinful Kingdom.

It does not appear needful to dwell on the Enquiry, whether this *Purple* or *Scarlet* be the Property of the Beaſt's *Trapings*, or inherent in its Body; for we read nothing of Trapings. We ſaw the Beaſt was like a Leopard, *Chap.* xiii. 2. that is, beautifully ſpotted: Here it is ſaid to be Scarlet coloured; not that the whole of it is ſo, elſe how

ſhould the *Names of Blaſphemy* appear to our Prophet? It would appear then, that the *Ground-colour* would be Scarlet, and the Characters of *Blaſphemy* of a different *Hue*, as if variegated in the Beaſt. Others think it like the Imbroideries of a Foot-mantle of State. However it was, the Beaſt ſeems to be a very formidable Emblem; which will be plain from,

2. The Character, *Full of Names of Blaſphemy*. Chap. xiii. 1. we had this Character of the *Beaſt that roſe out of the Sea*, with this Difference, there it is ſaid of the Head of the Beaſt, here it is ſaid of the whole Beaſt. If we allow that Beaſt to grow more wicked by its Continuance, we may very eaſily accommodate this: For there *John* had a View of it at its firſt Riſe, while *Blaſphemy* was confined in a great Meaſure to the Head: But as it advanced, it was all ſpeckled over with *Blaſphemy*; this is certainly true of the *Beaſt* here ſpoken of. The Matter will be the ſame, as to the Truth of the Thing, whether we mean by *Names*, *Perſons*, *Titles*, or *Doctrines*; for in this Power, the moſt of them all are ſpotted full with Blaſphemy. The further Illuſtration of this will be had in the Place quoted, and *v. 6.* of that Chapter.

As for the other two Characters, *Having ſeven Heads and ten Horns*, we had them above, *Chap.* xiii. 1. and their Explication is in this Chapter, *v.* 10, 12. to which Places we refer.

'Tis enquired here, Whether this *Beaſt* be the ſame with what we had, *Chap.* xiii. 1. or another different therefrom? Some think this is a new Emblem, and different from that in its Signification. Tho' it does in many Things reſemble it, yet it differs in more; for here a *Woman ſits* on this *Beaſt*, which is not ſaid of the other; this is of a *Scarlet* Colour, the other was like a *Leopard*; this has many Names of *Blaſphemy*, yea, is full of them; the other had them only on its *Head*; this Beaſt filled *John* with Wonder and Surpriſe, which it would not have done, had they been the ſame. There are others who, notwithſtanding of theſe Reaſons, think, tho' the Emblems be diverſe, yet the Signification is the ſame; And that the *ſeven Heads*, and *ten Horns*, with other Things fetched from the Text, prove this. I cannot join any of theſe while they are ſo far ſeparate, tho' I think both of them have *Truth* in their Aſſertions; but if we would add the *firſt* and *ſecond Beaſts* together, we will find them both here: This will caſt up afterwards, when an eaſy Solution will appear to all theſe great Difficulties, after we have conſidered the ſecond Part of the Emblem;

Where we have to view, 1. The Perſon. 2. Her Motto. 3. Her Condition.

4. And the Woman was arayed in Purple and ſcarlet Colour, and decked with Gold, and precious Stone and Pearls; having a golden Cup in her Hand, full of Abominations and Filthineſs of her Fornications.

In this we have, 1. The general Emblem. 2. Her Attire. 3. Her Proviſion.

1. The general Emblem, the *Woman*, who in the laſt Verſe is ſaid to *ſit* upon the *Beaſt*; ſo that it is the ſame Perſon here as there. We had the *Church* repreſented by a *Woman*, Chap. xii. 1. and very fine too, but her Ornaments of another Nature than *this Woman's*, and therefore they are not the ſame: Yea, there is as much Difference betwixt theſe *two Women*, as is betwixt a *chaſt Wife*, and a *common Whore*; The firſt, Scripture tells us, *is her Husband's Crown*; and the other is *the World's Shame*, and Plague. This Angel promiſed to ſhew this *Woman* to *John*, v. 1. and deſigns her *the great Whore*; ſo that ſhe is the very Reverſe of that Woman, *Chap.* xii. and therefore ſhe muſt ſignify not only a *Society*, which is not the *Church of God*, but is alſo the *Synagogue of Satan*; For there is no Agreement betwixt them, ſave in the moſt common Notion of the *Sex*. And that this has no further Reſpect to the other, but in the moſt common Notion of Religion; with this Difference, that there are as much *falſe* in the Whore, as is *true* in the Church. And ſo as, by the *Woman clothed in the Sun*, we underſtood the *true Church*; By this we are to mean all *falſe Religions*, whether in greater or ſmaller Societies; for in this lies the ſtated Oppoſition betwixt the *Lamb's Wife*, and whoever comes under the Comprehenſion of this *great Whore*. Now, from this general Senſe of the Words, it is very plain, they are too partial, who by this *Whore* would only underſtand the *apoſtate Church of* Rome, or only the Herd of *deluded* Mahometans, or the Sett of the *idolatrous* Gentiles, or yet all the falſe and *hypocritical Chriſtians*, which will be found every where under the Pale of Goſpel-Ordinances; and grow as Tares among the Wheat: Tho' ſome of theſe look liker the Church than others, yet, when they are throughly ſcanned, they will be found equally *eſtranged* from Chriſt, who is the *one Husband*; and conſequently all of them concur to make up what is repreſented by this *Whore*. I ſhall own, the *laſt* may go in with the other three, *i.e.*

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we may ſafely imagine all Hypocrites and mere Formaliſts to belong to one or other of theſe three Beaſts, explained *Chap.* xii. and xiii. and comprehended under that one Deſignation, *Babylon.*

The *Poſture* of this Woman is deſcribed in the former Verſe; ſhe is here ſaid *to ſit* upon the *Beaſt*: We ſhewed before, that *Sitting* ſignifies Authority and Continuance therein, and here, being conſidered with reſpect to the *Beaſt*, repreſents to us her *Pride* and *State*, and that ſhe uſed theſe Nations, who were Maſters of the World before, as *Beaſts*, and managed them at her Pleaſure: This is certain of theſe warlike People in *Paleſtine*, *Greece*, *Rome*, &c. who of old were vain of a rational Liberty, and are now quietly contented Slaves to *Popery* and *Mahometaniſm*, and have ſuffered their Eyes to be put out, that theſe may lead them by the Threed of *implicite Faith*, without Reluctancy, through all the wild Mazes of their ſeveral Deluſions: Yea, and it is as evident, as if written with a Sun-beam, that theſe wiſe and valiant Nations were no ſooner brought within the Snare of theſe falſe Religions, but by Degrees they became *emaſculate* and *infatuate*, and tamely jogged on, as they were led by the new Inventions of *whoriſh Idolatry*, to the Conſumption of an immenſe Quantity of both Blood and Treaſure; and for the moſt Part continue ſo.

II. Her *Attire*, where we ſhall notice its ſeveral Parts,

1. Her upper Garment which is the largeſt, *arayed in Purple and ſcarlet Colour.* I ſhewed before the ſeveral Thoughts of the Learned about *Scarlet*, and that many inclined rather to underſtand *Purple* thereby: But here we have them both, and muſt imagine them either to ſignify the ſame Thing, and ſo allow a Tautology in the Text, which I think is not to be done, or elſe that they have different Significations. As for the *Criticiſm*, that one Word is pure *Greek*, and the other *Latine*, with a *Greek Pronunciation*; and infer the *Woman* was to have Rule over both theſe *Empires*: I reckon it but *jejune*; beſides, if it were ſtrictly examined, they would not find the *Pope's* Power to reach ſo far, and yet he is all they take for the Senſe of the *Beaſt*, and the *Woman.* Others ſay, The Meaning is *gorgeous Apparel* in general, and that the particular Application is to the *Popiſh Clergy*, as *Popes*, *Patriarchs*, *Cardinals*, &c. becauſe theſe are vain of ſuch Colours. This is much a-kin to the former, only it cannot be refuſed, that theſe prime Perſons in the *Hierarchy* affect all the Pomp this ſpeaks. Yet I would think this *Robe* points at more than this, while the Expreſſion is ſo ſhort; and therefore I rather go in with theſe who ſay, There is an Alluſion to thoſe Caſes theſe Garments were uſed in, as of *Purple* in Time of Peace, and *Scarlet*, or a more glorious Purple, in Time of War; and ſo the Senſe is, She had Power of *Peace* and *War.*

2. Her *Ornaments* added to all her former Finery, ſhe was *decked with Gold, precious Stone, and Pearls.* This Clauſe has been variouſly toſſed: A late Author would have all theſe Things taken in a *literal Senſe*, and to ſignify worldly Pomp, and real Coſtlineſs of Apparel; The only Reaſon he gives, is, Becau e theſe Things are brou ght into the Deſcription of a *whoriſh Woman*, who uſually conceal the Want of real Worth, by ſuch Kind of Varniſh. But the Anſwer ſeems as obvious: This Emblem is no real Woman, as Mr. *Marck* owns, but the Type of *Antichriſt.* Now, why ſhould his Adornings be literally taken, when the Emblem of himſelf is not? This Way of treating Scripture is very unagreeable; for if the main Emblem be not real, but ſignificative of ſomewhat further, as is confeſt, then the Trapings cannot be real either. Beſides, we know from Scripture, that *Antichriſt* is a *Myſtery of Iniquity*; and if we make any Part of the Figure *real*, we deſtroy ſo much of the *Myſtery* Nor do I ſee any Reaſon why one Part ſhould be *myſtical*, and another *real*, e. g. Why not the *golden Cup* be *real*, as well as this *Gold*? &c. Yet I know of none alledge the former, yea, it would not make Senſe if they ſhould; and ſo, by a Parity of Reaſon, they muſt yield the other. That we may have ſome more diſtinct Thoughts of this, I offer a few Remarks;

(1.) *Gold, precious Stone* and *Pearls* are not *Ornaments* peculiar to a *Whore*: Many modeſt and chaſt Perſons have uſed them, without a Rebuke, if it was not above their Rank and Quality: We find *Daniel* a Man greatly beloved ſo accutred, for he had a *ſcarlet Robe, and a golden Chain about his Neck*, Dan. v. 29. and the Reaſon is added, *He was the third Ruler in the Kingdom*; ſo that this is one of the weakeſt of Inferences. It is alſo ſure, that many Whores never came the Length of Half this *Bravery.*

(2.) It is generally agreed, that this Clauſe of the Text is not cloſely rendered; for it ſhould read, *She was gilded with Gold*, &c. (as it is in the Margine.) It is evident, what is gilded is not Gold; for it were needleſs to varniſh over true Gold with Gold, becauſe its own intrinſick Beauty is better: Hence this Word ſeems to be induſtriouſly added by the Spirit, to diſtinguiſh this *Counterfeit* from *true Gold*; For Gilding will not abide the Trial of the Fire, which true Gold will, *Rev.* iii. 18. I think alſo the ſame

may be ſaid in Reaſon for the *precious Stone* and the *Pearls* aftermentioned, that they are not genuine, but ſpurious, as there are many ſuch to be found that will beguile the unknowing, as it ſeems to be here; theſe Things will look as if they were upright, while they are nothing leſs.

(3.) We know that ſpiritual Things are many a Time in Scripture repreſented under theſe Figures, as we found in the laſt-quoted Text: But I ſhall not promiſe with Aſſurance to hit the Meaning of them here. I prov'd, that the *Word of God* is compared to *Gold*; *Chriſt* is called *a precious Stone*, 1 Pet. ii. 4. and Believers are called *God's Jewels*. Here we read but of one precious Stone, and of many Pearls, yet none of all theſe are *genuine* with *Antichriſt*: Tho' the *Papiſts* pretend to build much upon the *Scripture*, they lay more Streſs upon *Tradition*; and, all Things conſidered, they may be ſaid to want the ſure Word of Prophecy. The *Mahometans* again lay their whole Streſs upon the *Alcoran*. Both of them pretend to a *Mediator*: But as the *Papiſts* have plum'd Chriſt of all his *Mediatory Offices*, ſo the *Mahometans* have put their *falſe Prophet* in his Room. Both of them boaſt much of their Saints, yet few of them, they lead their *Kalendar* with, had any Acquaintance with true Sanctification, or the Power of Godlineſs.

(4.) To confirm this to be the Meaning, it is plain what is here called her *Raiment*, is afterwards made her *Merchandice*, Chap. xviii. 12. and ſo they would have her to ſell her Clothes, which are the beſt Things about her. In that Place we will find in no tolerable Senſe theſe Things can be taken literally, and conſequently as little here.

III. Her Proviſion for her Purpoſe: *Having a golden Cup in her Hand*, &c. This is a figurative Deſcription of theſe Artifices and Means uſed by her to ſeduce the Nations. In the general, I obſerve the Agreement betwixt her *Sin* and her *Judgment*; ſhe has cook'd up her *Deluſion* in a *beautiful Diſh of Gold*, and therefore God in Juſtice reſerves her Plagues in *golden Vials*; which to me ſays, her Puniſhment will be as obſervable as her Tranſgreſſion, and bear no ſmall Proportion thereto. We would be a little more particular in this, tho' we had, *v.* 2. of this *Chapter*, and in *Chap.* xiv. 8. ſomething that much facilitates our Way, and to which we refer, and conſider lightly here theſe few Particulars;

1. The *Veſſel, a Cup*, which has its Name from a *Verb* that ſignifies to *drink*, and from its common Uſe imports *a large Cup well carved*. It is then a Piece of curious Workmanſhip: This was an ordinary Method, eſpecially with their great Ones in the Eaſtern Countries, to adorn their Drinking-cups with fine Engravings, to commend the Liquor to the Company; which muſt repreſent to us ſomething wherein *Babylon* has patch'd up for Uſe, what ſhe diſpenſes to the *Kings* and *Nations* of the *Earth*. Now, as before, by *Fornication*, we underſtood *Idolatry*; we are here to mean that wherein theſe abominable Practices were enjoined and required, and the Means they uſed to promote the ſame, which does the Office of a *Cup*; and ſo be her artificial *Statutes, Canons, Officials*, &c. which they command all to receive and conform to. This, as it reſpects the *Papiſts*, extends to their *Traditions, Decretals, Conſtitutions*, &c. And, as it reſpects the *Mahometans*, ſignifies their *Alcoran*, the *Rules* of *Hali*, and their other Saints; And finally, as it reſpects the *Heathen*, points at their *Oracles* and other Rules by which they behave themſelves. If it be here alledged, I make *three Cups*, whereas only one is mentioned in the Text. I anſwer, *Babylon* is called *one*, tho' it be proven it comprehends *three*. Again, tho' theſe ſeem to differ very much from one another, yet in this they harmoniouſly agree, that all oppoſe *Chriſt* and his *Kingdom*; in which Senſe they are but *one*. Finally, It may be deſigned a *Cup* in the *ſingular Number*, in Conformity to the *Viſion*, *one* Woman having *one* Cup, becauſe *two* might have been uneaſy; Beſides, the other Hand was to be imployed in the Management of the *Beaſt*: And that ſhe is ſaid to have this Cup *in her Hand*, ſhews how ready ſhe was to give it; and it was duly prepared, and openly expoſed to View.

2. The *Quality* of this Cup, *Golden*, or *of Gold*, we have an Expreſſion to this Purpoſe in *Jeremiah*, Jer. li. 7. *Babylon hath been a Golden Cup in the Lord's Hand, that hath made all the Earth drunken.* It is nearer ſtill, if we look to the firſt Language; for *hath been* is not in the *Original*, and ſome incline to read it by a very eaſy Tranſpoſition thus, Babylon's *Golden Cup from the Lord in her Hand hath made*, &c. for many a Time the *Hebrews* in their *Language* ſuppreſs *ſubſtantive Verbs* and *Pronouns*: And the Senſe that Expoſitors generally put upon the Words confirms this, *viz. That God did for holy Purpoſes ſuffer* Babylon *to riſe*, and grow up to great Glory and Power, that in *Juſtice* the Earth might be intoxicate. Now, what is more taking with earthly Men, than what is full of Pomp and Show? And *Gold* being one of the greateſt Embelliſhments of any earthly Thing, therefore the fineſt Things on Earth are deſigned by *Gold*; ſo the Heathen ſpoke fabulouſly of the *Golden Age*, and their fineſt

fineſt Maxims were called *Golden Sentences*: This may point at all theſe pompous and ſurpriſing *Myſteries*, in Subſtance *ſham*, but in Appearance *great* and *taking*, that are in all the three, and by which they amuſe the World with their *Ceremonies*, *Hierarchy*, and other *Traſh*, wherein conſiſts the Bulk of their Religion.

3. The Contents, *Abomination and Filthineſs of her Fornication.* We explain'd *Fornication* on *v.* 2. to be Idolatry. Here it is added, *the Abomination* and *Filthineſs*, which we are not ſo to underſtand as if they did appear to every Onlooker; For theſe Things are very artfully concealed, both by the *Golden Cup* in which they are, and by the Compoſition thereof reſembling *Wine*, v. 2. But to point out the true *Nature* thereof, as it is in itſelf, and in the Sight of God and good Men; It may alſo deſcribe the Tendency of the Contents of this Cup, to excite and provoke Men to every Thing, in a ſpiritual Senſe, that is *abominable*; as *Phylters*, or *Love-drinks* (as they call them) ſtimulate to all Manner of fleſhly Luſt, and to ſhew us that both are equally offenſive to God, and ruining to the Souls of ſuch as are intoxicate therewith.

4. The *Quantity*, *Full*; or, as the Word imports, *burdened with* or *heaped together*, ſignifies that Idolatry of hers to be very bulky in itſelf, and is a dead Weight upon every Part of the Conſtitution of *Babylon*; and that it is a *Compoſition* of many *Simples*, all *Evil*. If from this it be alledged, that then no Part of this *Character* of *myſtical Babylon* can belong to the *Church of* Rome; becauſe, however juſtly we may charge *her* with many Blemiſhes, yet it cannot be refuſed but there are many good Things in *her*; and ſo the whole *Mixture* is not *abominable*, according to the Text. I anſwer, 1. *Eccel.* x. 1. *If one dead Flie will cauſe the whole Pot of Ointment to ſend forth a ſtinking Savour*, much more will many. But, 2. Whatever good Thing may appear to be in *Popery*, yet even that is ſo mangled and enervate, that there is not one Chriſtian *Principle* or *Practice*, which they have not either ſo clipt or blended with other Things of a quite contrary Nature, that they have loſt their *integral* and *genuine* Perfection and Goodneſs: And ſo we may ſay with the Prophet, *Iſa.* i. 22. *Thy Silver is become Droſs.* And conſequently this Charge of *Abomination* and *Filthineſs* lies equally upon them and the other two.

5 And upon her Forehead was a Name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

This *Motto* is ſaid to be *written upon her Forehead*: We had the Word *Forehead*, *Chap.* vii. 3. It properly ſignifies the moſt *conſpicuous Part* of the Face, which is the *Brow* or *Forehead*, or that Part of the Countenance above the Eyes, or, as ſome think, betwixt them; which cannot be conceal'd, without obſtructing the Sight. Here it was the *Angel ſealed* the Servants of God, that the *Deſtroyer* ſeeing this Mark, might not injure them: Here it was the *hypocritical Jews* wore their *Phylacteries*, that they might have the Repute of Men devoted to the *Law of God*. In this Place, it is ſaid, *common Bawds* wore ſome diſtinguiſhing Mark, whereby they were known: Some think they did it of *Choice*; others that it was *impoſed* on them, to diſcriminate them from the Chaſt; and ſo it was a Mark of Infamy. Others think this *Ingraving* upon the Face of *Babylon*, is no more than an open Diſcovery of what ſhe really is in Nature. As ſome contend, in all Faces may be read either a good or bad Deſignation; thus in the *Chaſt*, *Shamefacedneſs*, or a modeſt Air; in the *Unclean*, *Impudence*, &c. And that other Crimes have their particular *Brands* by the God of Nature upon their *Faces*, which they are not able to *efface*: So we read that God ſet a *Mark* upon *Cain*. But paſſing theſe Things, apprehending ſome of them to be *uncertain*, and others more *curious* than *ſolid*; I am ready to think this *Name* is rather to be applied to the *Quality* than the *Perſon*, as *Chap.* viii. 11. the Name *Wormwood* is beſtowed upon the *Star*, to deſcribe the *Quality* of that *Star*, as is plain from what follows, *it made the Waters bitter*: So that here we are not to expect this *Name* ſhould be ſome Words compoſed of Letters, to be ſpell'd by all Spectators; but ſome ſure and infallible Characters to be ſeen and underſtood by all the ſerious and underſtanding Part of the Church, whereby they are capable to know that ſuch or ſuch a *politick Body* is that very *Antichriſtian* Kingdom foretold in this *Prophecy*, tho' they who bear the Character will keenly refuſe any ſuch Thing about them: More I cannot make of this with Safety. It is undeniably plain, that in all the three, *viz. Popery*, *Mahometaniſm*, and *Paganiſm*, there appear ſuch *Marks* of *Antichriſtianiſm*, that it is not poſſible to reſiſt the Evidence; but we muſt yield they conſtitute that *Antichriſt* is called alſo the *Man of Sin*, and here the *great Whore*.

The *Inſcription* itſelf we have in *three Expreſſions*, which have puzzled Interpreters how to range them; ſome making the *firſt* to comprehend the other *two*: Others make each of them exegetick of what went before, which is plainly to make them *all one*, with this only Difference, that the *ſecond* ſhall be clearer than the *firſt*, and the *laſt* than *both*. It is unqueſtionable, they are all *three figurative* and *prophetick*, and each of them apparently at an equal Diſtance from the Signification; and therefore the beſt Way will be to conſider them ſeparately, by which it will caſt up whether they ſignify *one* and the *ſame* Thing, or if they be diverſe from other. We have no Reaſon to doubt but the Prophet ſaw the *very Words* written upon the *Figure* of the *Woman*; and that we are only to ſee into the Truth of that *Type*, or what is ſignified by theſe Expreſſions, ſeems to be as evident. The

1. *Expreſſion* is, *Myſtery*, which we had before, *Chap.* i. 20. the *Myſtery* of the *Candleſticks and Stars*, where I ſhewed it to be *the obſcure Repreſentation of any Thing that cannot be clearly underſtood, till it be further explained.* That it was ſo to *John* at this Time, is evident, becauſe the *Angel* ſubjoins an Explication of the Viſion in the following Part of the Chapter: And that, in the Senſe given, *Antichriſt* was a *Myſtery* to the *Church*, not only before his *Riſe*, but even while he had made a great many *Advances*, is no leſs plain from what the Apoſtle remarks, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 7. that he was to be *a Myſtery of Iniquity*, i. e. this Man of Sin was not to be openly wicked, elſe he would have appeared in his *native Hue* at the firſt, and been exploded; but was to introduce *damnable Errors*, under the ſpecious Appearance of *Truth*; and *damn'd Impiety*, glaz'd over with the *Form of Holineſs*. This is indeed the common Method by which all Error is *Midwifed* into the World, under the Skirts of an affected Piety: This was the Courſe was taken, when the *Popiſh Tyranny* did riſe up out of the *Sea*: This was alſo the Method *Mahomet* and his Followers took, when he roſe up out of the *Earth*: This did no leſs appear in *Zoroaſtres*, when he new-methodiz'd *Heatheniſm*. Yea, this was the Way taken by all the Broachers and Abetters of Hereſy and Profanity: For, ſhould any of theſe appear plainly in their *Maſculine State* and *native Colours* at the firſt Start, ſuch a frightful *Spectre* would alarm the whole World. Thus all the three Parts of *myſtical Babylon* took their Riſe, and thus they advanced: Nor did they afterwards give over that *covert* Way of Working, tho' now they be more diſcernible than ſome Centuries back. This I take to be a more full and ſolid Account of this Part of the *Name* than what is advanced by ſome, that this was *literally* verified by all the Popes before *Julius* II. in the Beginning of the 16th Century, who had the Word *Myſtery written* or *engraven* within the *Folds* of their *Mitres*.

2. *Expreſſion* is, *Babylon the great*: We had this, *Chap.* xiv. 8. *Chap.* xvi. 19. Here only I am to note, that this Deſignation plainly points at a *Body Politick*, unite together by the Ties of Laws, Engagements, and Immunities for the *Deniſons* thereof; which repreſents the grown State of the *Antichriſtian Kingdom*, that in her Day ſhould be the greateſt upon the Face of the Earth: Which has been, and yet is verified in the fulleſt Senſe of all the three; there being now in Subjection to them the far greater Part of the World, and to any of them more by far than yet profeſſeth the Name of Chriſt, which yet is but a ſmall Flock amidſt a Multitude of ravenous and devouring *Wolves*. This Part of the *Motto* then I take to deſcribe *Antichriſt* when he arrived at *Maturity*, and came to his *Prime*: Nor was there leſs Force and Power able to preſerve that *Monſter*, than he required Cunning for his Production. I own, the ſame Maxims they eſpouſed from their Birth, were but improven for their Continuance; for there were (as has been proven) the ſame Principles and Maxims from the building of this *Babel*, which have ſince prevailed, and been all along fortified and practiſed. Nor were there Need of any other, till all of them found themſelves in a *declining Condition*, and then all Hands were ſet to Work, to prevent a *Downfall* they ſo much feared, and which the *Church* of Chriſt prays for; And this will probably continue till the Time come God will plead his Controverſy.

3. *Expreſſion* is, *Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth.* We have ſeen *Antichriſt* in his *Riſe* and *Increaſe*; now we have his *Fruits*, which are juſt like the *Tree*: Where I ſhall ſhortly view,

(1.) The *Fertility* of this *Babylon*, under the Notion of a *Mother*: Which has ſeveral Things in its Comprehenſion, obvious to every Eye; as, 1. *Increaſe*. We no ſooner hear of a *Mother*, than we preſently think of one or more *Births*; for this is a relative Character, and cannot agree to the Barren: Yet this Multiplication is with a Curſe, and not with a Bleſſing; the Providence of God does concur, but his Grace never. 2. *Authority*: This *Mother* exerciſeth Juriſdiction over her Children; this is verified in all the three, who contend much for *Motherſhip* over all theſe States of the World, where they have got their Seed planted. It is alſo true, that all are fond to remember

remember the Pit whence they were digged. 3. The *tender Care* of this *Mother* towards her *Brood*, to be ſeen in them *all*, who reckon it highly meritorious, by whatever Method, to preſerve what Footing they get in any Place; hence come the equally *Popiſh* and *Mahometan* Doctrines, of making Conſcience to break Faith with all whom they once *damned* by the odious Names of *Hereticks*, *Apoſtates*, &c. and to bring upon ſuch all the Miſchief, by *Perſecutions*, *Maſſacres*, &c. their debauched Principles can direct them to.

(2.) The *Productions* of this *Mother*, which are mentioned to be two, and both of her own Kind; 1. *Harlots* or *Fornicators*, for the Matter is the ſame, nor ſhall we encourage any Strife about Words; this will take in all Idolaters, of what Make ſoever, and all the cadet Errors that ſpring from theſe, as *Socinians*, *Deiſts*, *Free-thinkers*, *Arminians*, *Arians*, *Antinomians*, &c. which are the Productions of *Popery*. As for the other *two Parts* of this *Mother*, having no Concern with them, we paſs them; only, it is certain, theſe are no leſs broody than this. 2. *Abominations*: This we had in the preceeding Verſe, which may be remembred here, unleſs we will, with a late Writer, underſtand it of theſe wicked and irreligious Practices, which owe their Original to ſuch Principles as we have mentioned before, and prevail thorow the whole habitable Earth.

3 And I ſaw the Woman drunken with the Blood of the Saints, and with the Blood of the Martyrs of Jeſus: And when I ſaw her, I wondred with great Admiration.

Here we have, 1. Her Condition, 2. The Cauſe, 3. Their Effect on the Apoſtle.

1. Her Condition, *I ſaw her drunken.* Some skrew the Senſe of this Word to the greateſt and moſt amazing Effects of *Drunkenneſs*, as *Reeling*, *Staggering*, *Raving*, *Vomiting*, &c. But, if this ſhould obtain, then, after ſuch a Surfeit, little Harm might be feared from her: But, it is plain, in this Viſion he had a View of her in all her poſſible Advantages. Nor indeed will the Word bear this Senſe; for it ſignifies no more *Drunkenneſs*, than what cheers the Mind, and relaxes from Cares: So we have the Word taken, *John* ii. 10. *When Men have well drunk, then that which is worſe.* Where, it is very plain, this Company had not drunk to *Madneſs* or *Stupidity*, but to *Cheerfulneſs*. The *Seventy* tranſlate an *Hebrew* Word by the ſame in our Text, when *Joſeph* feaſted his Brethren, it is ſaid, *Gen.* xliii. 34. *They drank, and were merry*: Where, to be ſure, there were not theſe Effects they contend for here. Yet all this While, I think, the former Senſe does leſs aggravate the Sin of *Antichriſt*, than does this: For the Meaning is, When they had ſhed a great deal of the beſt Blood in the World, and, after the Blood of our bleſſed Lord, moſt valuable in the Sight of God, it was to *Antichriſt* like a moderate Refreſhment; and, inſtead of any Remorſe, there is a Gaiety and *great Cheerfulneſs* upon his Spirits, as if it had been his greateſt *Cordial*, to water the Earth with their Blood. There is another Paſſage in this Prophecy that clears this to be the Meaning of it; and, for ought I know, both may point at the ſame, *Chap.* xi. 10. *They that dwell on the Earth ſhall rejoice over them,* χαροῦσιν, (from which comes a Word common enough in our Language, *Carouſe*) *and make merry*, &c. We ſee then what a Temper *Antichriſt* has, that can take as much Pleaſure in ſhedding the Blood of God's Saints, as in what is moſt cheering and comfortable.

2. The Cauſe of this Cheerfulneſs, *The Blood of the Saints, and the Martyrs of Jeſus.* Any Woman, not paſt Senſe of Shame, and who had not put off that Compaſſion natural to the tender Sex, would have been ſtruck with Aſtoniſhment and Pity, tho' freee of the Guilt; but this Woman is cheered by it, and comforted to a high Pitch, tho' ſhe was the Shedder of that Blood. The only Difficulty that remains, is to diſtinguiſh betwixt *Saints* and *Martyrs*: Some, by *Saints*, underſtand theſe before called *Prophets*, as if all the Lord's People were not *Saints* as well as the *Prophets*. Others, again, from the Doubling of the Word *Blood*, think, that, by the Blood of the *Saints*, is to be meant theſe ſhe overthrew in Battles, or Maſſacres, or by more clandeſtine Methods: And by the Blood of *Martyrs*, theſe who ſuffered in a Way of *Proceſs*, and ſealed the Truths of Chriſt with their Blood, being his Witneſſes, and adhering to his Cauſe, in Spite of all the Cruelty their Enemies could exerciſe againſt them. If the two muſt be diſtinguiſhed, this bids faireſt for it; tho', I am ready to believe, they may refer to the ſame Perſons, and the firſt to denote their *Quality*, *Saints*; as the other points at the Nature of their Death, *violent*.

3. The Effect this Viſion had upon *John*, *When I ſaw her, I wondred with great Admiration.* I do think, Mr. *Marck*'s Tranſlation of theſe Words preferable to any

other. It runs Word for Word, according to the Original, this, *And I wondred, ſeeing her a great Prodigy, or Wonder*: So that what our Tranſlation makes the Affection of the Prophet's Surpriſe, he joins to the Object or Thing wondred at, and ſhews it was very *wonderful*. The Reaſon he gives, beſides the Order of the Words, is, becauſe the Word θαῦμα always reſpects the Cauſe of Admiration, and not the Act of it. And further, that the *Angel*, in his After-explication of the Viſion, takes no Notice of the great *Admiration*, but ſimply of his *Wonder, Wherefore didſt thou marvel?* which yet he thinks, did this *Admiration* reſpect *John*, he would not have neglected to do.

But, my joining this learned Author, is not to skreen our *Prophet* from an Objection that is raiſed againſt him, That he ſomeway ſymbolized with theſe *who wondred after the Beaſt*, Chap. xii. 3. as if there had been no other Way of vindicating him, than quarrelling the Tranſlation; for it is ſaid, Theſe that *wondred* after the Beaſt, did alſo *worſhip the Beaſt*; and ſo *Adoration* is mixed with their *Admiration*, as is plain from v. 4 of that Chapter. But our *Prophet* was ſtruck with Aſtoniſhment at the Sight of ſuch a Monſter, both of the *Beaſt* and the *Woman*, and eſpecially that God ſhould thus bear with her, and not immediately break her in Pieces with the Vials of his Wrath. This ſeems neceſſarily here to have Place, as a Part of the Cauſe of *John*'s Wonder, becauſe the *Angel*'s Speech does immediately relate thereto, *v.* 17. *God hath put it in their Hearts to fulfil his Will, and to agree, and give their Kingdom unto the Beaſt, until the Words of God ſhall be fulfilled.*

It may be enquired, Why did *John wonder* ſo much at this Beaſt, ſeeing it is the ſame with what he ſaw before, *Chap.* xiii. where it is not ſaid he wondred? *Anſw. John* had indeed ſeen an Emblem before to the ſame Purpoſe in the *Dragon*, Chap. xii. and the *two Beaſts*, Chap. xiii. but here he at once ſaw all in one Emblem, and with ſome Variations; and a Deſire to know the Meaning of both the Emblems themſelves, and the Remaniſeſtation of them, might increaſe both his Aſtoniſhment, and Deſire to have the ſame explained to him, which he meets with in the following Verſes.

I would premiſe a few Things to the following Explication.

1. This is the only *Viſion* we find explain'd in the whole *Prophecy*, which aſſures us of the great Moment of it; for, had it not had ſomething of more Importance, the *Spirit of God* would not have been at Pains to clear it, both for the Satisfaction of our *Prophet*, and for the Comfort of the Church in all Ages after him, but ſuffered the ſame to paſs in the ſame obſcure *Types* with the former and theſe that follow.

2. This *Interpretation* is the Work of an *Angel*, which will not infer that all Angels do perfectly know all theſe Myſteries contain'd in this Part of the Scripture, tho', to be ſure, their Penetration is more lively than that of any Man: But we muſt allow this *Angel* to be inſtructed in this Expoſition by our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, partly for the Comfort of the beloved Diſciple, but chiefly for the Edification of his *own Body* the Church.

3. This Expoſition is ſtill in *prophetick* Terms, that it might not be equally obvious to all, but is wrapt up in ſuch unuſual Expreſſions, and dark Emblems, as none can underſtand, but ſuch as are imployed in the Search of the Meaning of the more intricate Paſſages of Scripture, wherein alſo the moſt occulate many a Time are at no ſmall Loſs. However, this being chiefly the Task of ſuch Members of the Church as the Lord ſtirs up to this hard and difficult Piece of Work, they therefore may be ſuppoſed to have more of the *Spirit's* Aſſiſtance with them in their cloſs Endeavours, than others, who inure themſelves in a looſer Way of thinking. Before we come to this *angelick Commentary* upon the Emblem, we view the *Introduction* thereto, Verſe

7 And the Angel ſaid unto me, Wherefore didſt thou marvel? I will tell thee the Myſtery of the Woman, and of the Beaſt that carrieth her, which hath the ſeven Heads and ten Horns.

In this we have a Queſtion propoſed, and anſwered by the Queriſt.

I. The Queſtion: Where, 1. Who asked it. 2. At whom. 3. What was enquired.

1. The Queriſt, *the Angel*: This Expreſſion brings him in as one of the *Prophet's* Acquaintances, and with whom he had converſed before; which, to be ſure, can be none other but that Angel we heard of *v.* 1. *viz.* One of the *Seven* that had the golden Vials; yea, that particular *Angel* who had carried *John* away to the *Wilderneſs*, and diſcovered to him the *Viſion* before-mentioned; for this *Angel* was the fitteſt *Interpreter*.

2. To

2. To whom was this Queſtion propoſed? *To Me*, ſays *John*; now ſwallowed up of a fearful and ſurpriſing Aſtoniſhment, than which no Temper of Mind could be more unfit for remembring and conſiderately reflecting on theſe extraordinary Manifeſtations: For, as One remarks, There is no greater Obſtruction to true Conſideration, than a great ſtunning Surpriſe. And therefore we may reckon the Angel's Deſign was not ſo much to check *John* for ſuffering himſelf to be thus ſtupified with Wonder, becauſe the extraordinary Nature of the Thing might reaſonably beget this; as in a gentle and eaſy Manner to bring the *Prophet* to himſelf, from this his Conſternation: Which will further appear from the Conſideration of,

3. The Queſtion, *Wherefore didſt thou marvel?* Some will have this to contain a very heavy *Challenge* againſt the *Prophet*, and a plain Reproof, that the Viſion made him forget the *Angel*'s Undertaking, *v.* 1. *To ſhew him the Judgment of the great Whore*; Whereas hitherto he had not ſhewed him any Thing but the *Whore* herſelf, and had not ſpoke one Word concerning her *Judgment*: And they are at Pains to aggravate this Eſcape of *John*, in diſregarding the Words of the *Angel*; a Sin, they tell us from Scripture, has brought very remarkable Reproofs upon ſuch as have fallen into this Fault, as *Zacharias*, Luke i. 20. But, I having ſhewed from *v.* 1. the Word *Judgment* does not only ſignify a *Sentence*, and the *Execution* thereof, but alſo the *Grounds* of it; And this being firſt in the Order of both Nature and Time, the *Prophet* had in the Viſion a very full Diſcovery of it, which, as we have heard, did throw him into ſuch a Conſternation; and therefore I am ready to think this Queſtion to contain a moderate Expoſtulation, to recover *John*, that he might with the more Attention liſten to what the *Angel* had further in Commiſſion. We find ſuch Queſtions in Scripture are not always reprehenſory, as, *Iſa.* xl. 27. *Why ſayſt thou, O* Jacob? *and, why ſpeakeſt thou, O* Iſrael? Where, it is plain, the Lord is comforting them, and endeavouring to reduce them to a Compoſure of Mind, fit for Conſideration: Or, if we pleaſe, we may take the Senſe of the Queſtion to be a very encouraging Diſſwaſive, and without any Irritation; We have a plain Inſtance to this Purpoſe, *Luke* xxiv. 5. *Why ſeek ye the Living among the Dead?* No doubt theſe Gentlemen would make this a round Expoſtulation, in their Way of Speaking, if we had not the Words interpreted by the Spirit of God, *Mark* xvi. 6. *Be not afraid, he is not here, he is riſen.* This I take as both the ſofteſt and ſureſt Senſe; *q. d.* You are the beloved Diſciple, who had many diſtinguiſhing Marks of your Maſter's Favour, and the Viſions you have had in this *Iſle* are none of the leaſt of them; therefore ſuffer not yourſelf to be tranſported with Amazement, which may hinder your calm Conſideration of the more comfortable Part of the Revelation which now I am ordered to deliver unto you. This will be yet plainer from the following Promiſe in the reſt of the Verſe, and is the beſt Anſwer could be given for *John*'s Purpoſe, and is

The II. Thing in the Text, *I will tell thee the Myſtery*, &c. Where is great Condeſcenſion towards *John*, and a further Encouragement to ſhake off his *Amazement*, that he was to diſcover this Viſion in Terms the Apoſtle was no Stranger to. The ſeveral Terms in this Promiſe we had before, and ſhall only now offer a Remark or two;

1. This Viſion was a *Myſtery* to the *Apoſtle* himſelf; nay, and ſo might the other Viſions to which this refers: For indeed this Explication ſeems deſigned, not only to illuſtrate this *Viſion* in the preceeding Part of the Chapter, but to give the Senſe of all the *Seals*, *Trumpets* and *Vials*, in a plainer Language than what we had before in any of the Viſions.

2. The Condeſcenſion of God appears wonderfully in this, not to *John* only, but to the whole Church, which muſt of Neceſſity have been denied to the Knowledge of theſe *Myſteries*, till it had pleaſed God in the Exerciſe of his holy Providence to unravel the ſame; And then too, becauſe by the Want of theſe notable Helps, the Conjectures muſt be more undigeſted.

3. The Angel does not ſay here, as *v.* 1. *I will ſhew*, for that was over; and probably the Emblems were removed, yea, it ſeems neceſſary we think ſo: For, had they continued ſtill in his View, they would have broke his Attention to the *Angel*'s Narrative, which was of ſo great Moment. And this is not obſcurely inſinuate in the next Verſe, where he begins with theſe Words, *The Beaſt which thou ſaweſt*; So that, in all Probability, both the *Beaſt* and the *Woman* were out of his View; and therefore he ſays here, *I will tell thee*: Which properly reſpects a verbal Relation, without any Emblem or Repreſentation interveening.

4. There are two Turns of Expreſſion in the Words, which have created Uneaſineſs to ſome, but, in my Opinion, without Ground; 1. That here the *Woman* is firſt named, but laſt conſidered, and ſhortly too. This might with as much Equity have been objected, *v.* 3. where ſhe is alſo firſt named, and laſt conſidered. And that the Conſide-

ration of the *Woman* is much circumſcribed in Compariſon of the *Beaſt*, may be, becauſe the *Beaſt* is but touched at in the Viſion, and the Account of the *Woman* at a great deal more Length; and therefore it is but equal that the *Beaſt* ſhould be explained at greater Length: And ſo, betwixt the Viſion and the Explication, we have a full Account of both. 2. It is ſaid, *v.* 3. *The Woman ſat upon the Beaſt*; here it is ſaid, *The Beaſt carried the Woman*: Theſe two Expreſſions ſeem in all Reaſon to be *equipolent*; and further, to aſſure us, if the Beaſt had not ſupported the Woman, ſhe could never have made ſuch a Figure in the World, which will be found to be a Truth as plain as neceſſary.

5. That the Particles are prefixed to both the *Heads* and *Horns*, is to aſſure us it is the ſame *Beaſt* with the ſame *Heads* and the ſame *Horns* he had ſeen in the Viſion, he was now to tell him of: And ſo this Senſe given, binds us down to the Parts of the *Viſion* before-mentioned.

The Explication of the Viſion conſiſts of three general Parts; 1. The Narrative of the Beaſt at great Length, to *v.* 15. 2. The Explication of the Waters, from thence to *v* 18. 3. A ſhort Hint of the Woman, in that Verſe.

The Explication of the Beaſt imploys no leſs than ſeven Verſes, about which we are not to queſtion but the Apoſtle underſtood the Words of the Angel, becauſe well acquainted with the Prophetick Stile: And where that could not be ſerviceable to him, he uſeth plainer Words, that all may be underſtood. Yet it will not be found ſo eaſy to us, ſo much eſtranged to the Phraſes of the Prophets; and therefore we find ſo great a Variety of Thoughts about the given Senſe, ſo that the more Caution will be needful as we go on. We ſhall take up what is ſaid of the Emblem of the Beaſt in theſe; 1. A general Account of the Beaſt, *v.* 8. 2. The Meaning of the Heads thereof, to *v.* 12. 3. The Senſe of the Horns, in the next three Verſes.

8 The Beaſt that thou ſaweſt, was, and is not, and ſhall aſcend out of the bottomleſs Pit, and go into Perdition; and they that dwell on the Earth ſhall wonder (whoſe Names are not written in the Book of Life from the Foundation of the World) when they behold the Beaſt that was, and is not, and yet is.

In this we have, 1. A very ſtrange Account of the Beaſt's Subſiſtence. 2. His Spring or Origin. 3. His Iſſue. 4. The Reception he meets with in the World.

1. The Subſiſtence of this Beaſt, *The Beaſt which thou ſaweſt, was, and is not, and ſhall aſcend.* Some think this to be a *Paradox*, at leaſt ſeemingly: I own I ſee no ſuch Thing, for it is not ſaid that *it was*, and *was not* at the ſame Time; and the bringing in of *yet is*, from the Cloſe of the Text, is indeed to make it a Paradox; but then they leave the natural Order of the Text, and ſo it is themſelves are guilty of the Paradox, and not the *Angel*: For it is plain that Expreſſion, *yet is*, could not take Place till after the Beaſt did aſcend out of the bottomleſs Pit, when the World ſhould wonder after the *Beaſt*; ſo that there will be ſeveral Hundreds of Years interſtice betwixt what we have in the Beginning, and what is ſaid in the Cloſe of the Verſe. But I am ſure, there is no Paradox in the firſt Clauſe of the Verſe, to ſay that a Thing *was*, and *is not*, and *yet ſhall be*, which is all aſſerted by the *Angel*; for the firſt is an *Hiſtory*, the ſecond a *Declaration*, and the third a *Prophecy*; all which can moſt harmoniouſly conſpire to be true, without any ſuch mighty Difficulty. The not conſidering of this, has betrayed the Learned to many raſh Thoughts about this. There are only two Opinions (becauſe moſt followed) I ſhall notice here.

Some make this *Beaſt* juſt as broad and wide as the *Roman Empire*; and, by *was*, underſtand theſe Forms of Government that State had undergone from its firſt Riſe: And by *is not*, that theſe Models are all laid aſide, and another introduced in their Room, which they make to be the Senſe of *yet is*, in the Cloſe of the Verſe. Others again add a Word of their own, which they think is underſtood after *is not*, viz. *to continue*, and ſo it is a Prophecy of the Subverſion of the *Roman Empire*: And by *ſhall aſcend*, they think the Riſe of the Papacy is comprehended. This ſeems to run pretty ſmoothly, if it did not rub hard upon the Text, which I take to be an unpardonable Crime. Beſides, they make not Conſcience of keeping by their own *Hypotheſes*; for, tho' they make the *Roman Empire* to be the Dimenſions of this *Beaſt*, yet they make it fall in with *Papal Rome*, which to be ſure makes a notable Variation of the Term. Again, it is not tolerable to ſay of the *Roman Empire*, *that it was, and is not*; and make

make that to be true in *John*'s Time, for it was very great then: And to ſay it *was not* in one Senſe, and yet *was* in another, is to make the Angel guilty of a pitiful Pun, if not ſomething worſe. To be ſure it is the ſame Subject in all the three, under this formal Reduplication, as Enemies ſtated to the Cauſe and Intereſt of God in the World; and the Affirmation, *it was*, muſt be true thereof: The Negation, *it is not*, muſt be as true in the Apoſtle's Time: And the third, *it ſhall be*, muſt have taken Place ſince. All which cannot be ſaid of the *Roman Empire*, let us underſtand it as we will.

There is another Opinion of a late learned Author, who tells us, We are to ſeek no further for the Senſe of this, than the very Time of the Viſion; and ſo, by a very eaſy Method, he reſolves all theſe and other Difficulties that caſt up. For by that Enunciation, *was*, he means in the Emblem when *John* ſaw it: And by that, *is not*, he underſtands that now the Scene was altered, and theſe Types did no more appear to the *Prophet's* View: As for the third, *ſhall aſcend* (which is the greateſt Strait, and which he paſſeth in the Beginning of the Verſe) he makes that to be the Truth ſignified by the Emblem, that it ſhould appear. But here he commits a groſs *Paralogiſm*, which he endeavours to conceal in the next Clauſe, by telling us, It is the ſame Subject that was to riſe out of the bottomleſs Pit, which was to go into Perdition: But the Thing to be proven was, That it was the ſame Subject which *ſometime was*, but then *was not*, was to riſe out of the bottomleſs Pit; and then the laſt Clauſe will need no Proof at all, for I believe it is granted on all Hands. But it is plain he ſpeaks of the Emblem, when he ſays, *it was*, and *was not*; and he muſt mean the Truth or Thing ſignified by the Emblem, when ſays, *it ſhall aſcend*: But he foreſaw, ſhould he keep the ſame Senſe, it would follow, that the Emblem was to go into Perdition, which would have marred all. And to prove that it is the *Truth* afterwards meant, he quotes the Words of the *Apoſtle* in the Original, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 7. *The Myſtery of Iniquity already worketh*; which the more expoſes his Senſe. And, after all, it would be to make the *Angel* falſify his Promiſe in the former Verſe, that he would *tell him the Myſtery of the Beaſt*, i. e. he would tell him the Signification of the Beaſt in the Emblem, which he advances in the firſt Clauſe of the Verſe, *The Beaſt which thou ſaweſt*: And conſequently the firſt *Predicate* muſt be the Truth. And that *it was, is not*, and *ſhall aſcend*, the ſame Method the *Angel* uſeth with all the reſt, as, *v.* 9. *The ſeven Heads are ſeven Mountains*; *The ten Horns are ten Kings*; And *the Woman is that great City*. And to be ſure we muſt proceed the ſame Way here; and conſequently this is not ſpoken of the Emblem, but of the Signification thereof.

Now we are to offer ſomething in the Room of theſe, which I ſhall not ſay is quite the Truth, tho' I foreſee very few and inconſiderable Difficulties it is preſſed with; and it is this, By this *Beaſt* and *Babylon* we are to mean the ſame Thing, which ſeems very plain from *Chap.* xiv. 8, 9. compared together; for what is called *Babylon*, v. 8. is deſigned the *Beaſt* and his *Image* in the next Verſe: And if the *Beaſt* ſpoken of there, be the ſame with what we have here, as I think is made out in the preceeding Part of this Chapter, then it will follow, that *Babylon* and this *Beaſt* is the ſame. The Harmony betwixt *Babylon* and *Antichriſt* we had Occaſion to purſue at Length formerly, and therefore it needs be no Surpriſe. I aſſert now what is proven before. But then as to the Application of this to the three Expreſſions in the Text; As to the firſt, *It was*, i. e. literal *Babylon* was, and was the only Enemy in her Time to the People of God: For, after many Conflicts, they were all made Captives at *Babylon*, whom the King of *Aſſyria* had not carried away before; and there they were detained for the Space of Seventy Years, after which the *Jewiſh* Church was delivered, and the *Chaldean* Empire deſtroyed. The only Objection I can think of is this, That this Beaſt is to be meant of Enemies to the New Teſtament Church, and therefore literal *Babylon* cannot be brought upon the Field. I anſwer, This cannot be proven; for tho' I grant the whole Prophecy concerns Things that were to come to paſs after the Viſion, yet this will not hinder the Prophet to carry the Pedigree of Chriſt's Enemies higher than his Coming in the Fleſh. Beſides, the *Chriſtian Church* at this Time was but in her Cradle, and new ſprung; nor had ſhe ever an Enemy near like to *Babylon* to engage: And it is owned by all, That the *Old Teſtament* and *New Teſtament Churches* were upon the ſame Footing, but under different Diſpenſations. As to the ſecond, *Is not*; This was perfectly true of literal *literal Babylon*, which was broke and demoliſhed long before. 'Tis alſo evident that this ſhort Clauſe, *is not*, is equivalent to being dead or deſtroyed, *Gen.* xxxvii. 30. *The Child is* not, &c. *and one is not*, Gen. xlii. 13. This is true to a Point. If it be urged here, Did not the *Heathen Empire* of *Rome* ſupply the Room of *Babylon*, and that was then in Being? Anſwer, It is true it conſtitutes a Part of *myſtical Babylon*, yet even at that Time *Rome* was not ſuch a formidable Enemy to the Chriſtian Church, as *Old Babylon* was to the *Jewiſh*; for all the Perſecutions intented before this Time, were

ration of the *Woman* is much circumſcribed in Compariſon of the *Beaſt*, may be, becauſe the *Beaſt* is but touched at in the Viſion, and the Account of the *Woman* at a great deal more Length; and therefore it is but equal that the *Beaſt* ſhould be explained at greater Length: And ſo, betwixt the Viſion and the Explication, we have a full Account of both. 2. It is ſaid, *v.* 3. *The Woman ſat upon the Beaſt*; here it is ſaid, *The Beaſt carried the Woman*: Theſe two Expreſſions ſeem in all Reaſon to be *equipolent*; and further, to aſſure us, if the Beaſt had not ſupported the Woman, ſhe could never have made ſuch a Figure in the World, which will be found to be a Truth as plain as neceſſary.

5. That the Particles are prefixed to both the *Heads* and *Horns*, is to aſſure us it is the ſame *Beaſt* with the ſame *Heads* and the ſame *Horns* he had ſeen in the Viſion, he was now to tell him of: And ſo this Senſe given, binds us down to the Parts of the *Viſion* before-mentioned.

The Explication of the Viſion conſiſts of three general Parts; 1. The Narrative of the Beaſt at great Length, to *v.* 15. 2. The Explication of the Waters, from thence to *v* 18. 3. A ſhort Hint of the Woman, in that Verſe.

The Explication of the Beaſt imploys no leſs than ſeven Verſes, about which we are not to queſtion but the Apoſtle underſtood the Words of the Angel, becauſe well acquainted with the Prophetick Stile: And where that could not be ſerviceable to him, he uſeth plainer Words, that all may be underſtood. Yet it will not be found ſo eaſy to us, ſo much eſtranged to the Phraſes of the Prophets; and therefore we find ſo great a Variety of Thoughts about the given Senſe, ſo that the more Caution will be needful as we go on. We ſhall take up what is ſaid of the Emblem of the Beaſt in theſe; 1. A general Account of the Beaſt, *v.* 8. 2. The Meaning of the Heads thereof, to *v.* 12. 3. The Senſe of the Horns, in the next three Verſes.

8 The Beaſt that thou ſaweſt, was, and is not, and ſhall aſcend out of the bottomleſs Pit, and go into Perdition; and they that dwell on the Earth ſhall wonder (whoſe Names are not written in the Book of Life from the Foundation of the World) when they behold the Beaſt that was, and is not, and yet is.

In this we have, 1. A very ſtrange Account of the Beaſt's Subſiſtence. 2. His Spring or Origin. 3. His Iſſue. 4. The Reception he meets with in the World.

1. The Subſiſtence of this Beaſt, *The Beaſt which thou ſaweſt, was, and is not, and ſhall aſcend.* Some think this to be a *Paradox*, at leaſt ſeemingly: I own I ſee no ſuch Thing, for it is not ſaid that *it was*, and *was not* at the ſame Time; and the bringing in of *yet is*, from the Cloſe of the Text, is indeed to make it a Paradox; but then they leave the natural Order of the Text, and ſo it is themſelves are guilty of the Paradox, and not the *Angel*: For it is plain that Expreſſion, *yet is*, could not take Place till after the Beaſt did aſcend out of the bottomleſs Pit, when the World ſhould wonder after the *Beaſt*; ſo that there will be ſeveral Hundreds of Years interſtice betwixt what we have in the Beginning, and what is ſaid in the Cloſe of the Verſe. But I am ſure, there is no Paradox in the firſt Clauſe of the Verſe, to ſay that a Thing *was*, and *is not*, and *yet ſhall be*, which is all aſſerted by the *Angel*; for the firſt is an *Hiſtory*, the ſecond a *Declaration*, and the third a *Prophecy*; all which can moſt harmoniouſly conſpire to be true, without any ſuch mighty Difficulty. The not conſidering of this, has betrayed the Learned to many raſh Thoughts about this. There are only two Opinions (becauſe moſt followed) I ſhall notice here.

Some make this *Beaſt* juſt as broad and wide as the *Roman Empire*; and, by *was*, underſtand theſe Forms of Government that State had undergone from its firſt Riſe: And by *is not*, that theſe Models are all laid aſide, and another introduced in their Room, which they make to be the Senſe of *yet is*, in the Cloſe of the Verſe. Others again add a Word of their own, which they think is underſtood after *is not*, viz. *to continue*, and ſo it is a Prophecy of the Subverſion of the *Roman Empire*: And by *ſhall aſcend*, they think the Riſe of the Papacy is comprehended. This ſeems to run pretty ſmoothly, if it did not rub hard upon the Text, which I take to be an unpardonable Crime. Beſides, they make not Conſcience of keeping by their own *Hypotheſes*; for, tho' they make the *Roman Empire* to be the Dimenſions of this *Beaſt*, yet they make it fall in with *Papal Rome*, which to be ſure makes a notable Variation of the Term. Again, it is not tolerable to ſay of the *Roman Empire*, *that it was, and is not*; and

make

make that to be true in *John*'s Time, for it was very great then: And to ſay it *was not* in one Senſe, and yet *was* in another, is to make the Angel guilty of a pitiful Pun, if not ſomething worſe. To be ſure it is the ſame Subject in all the three, under this formal Reduplication, as Enemies ſtated to the Cauſe and Intereſt of God in the World; and the Affirmation, *it was*, muſt be true thereof: The Negation, *it is not*, muſt be as true in the Apoſtle's Time: And the third, *it ſhall be*, muſt have taken Place ſince. All which cannot be ſaid of the *Roman Empire*, let us underſtand it as we will.

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rather for the Propagation than Extirpation of *Chriſtianity*; For thereby the Members of the Church were ſcattered thro' the World, to ſpread the Word of Life, which they did with great Succeſs. But we gave a ſhort Hint at the State of the *Church* before the writing of this Prophecy, from *Chap.* i. 9. As to the third, *And ſhall aſcend*; this is certainly to be meant of *myſtical* or *ſpiritual Babylon*, which did not appear ſome Hundereds of Years after this Prophecy. Nor will that Objection hold, That we are never to take *Babylon* literally in this Prophecy, tho' it be true as to what was then to come. If it be further urged, Then here we allow of a Paralogiſm, I refuſe it; For in all the three it is a real Enemy, and tho' ſubſiſting in different Periods of the World, yet acted by the ſame Spirit, and therefore the ſame Name is beſtowed upon both: Whereas, in the former Opinion of Mr. *Marck*, the *Beaſt* was taken for the *Emblem* in the *firſt two*, and for the *Truth* in the *third*; But here it is for the Truth in them all. As for the Way of his aſcending, we had it at Length on *Chap.* xiii. 1, 11.

2. His Origin, *Out of the bottomleſs Pit.* This was explained on *Chap.* xi. 7. Not that he came perſonally out of Hell, but that he had all thence that conſtitute him the *Beaſt* or *Babylon.*

3. His Iſſue or Exit, *Shall go into Perdition*, i. e. One that is devoted of God unto Deſtruction, and this determined upon him before he roſe; for that God, that did fore-ordain to permit his Being and Increaſe, took Care to limit him as to his Continuance, and alſo to eſtabliſh the Way of his Judgment. We will have the full Senſe of this on *Chap.* xix. 20. to which we refer.

4. The Reception this *Beaſt* will meet with in the World, *They that dwell on the Earth ſhall wonder, when they behold the Beaſt that was, and is not, and yet is*: The firſt Part of this we had, *Chap.* xiii. 3. There is an Addition made here, to the Deſcription of the *Beaſt*, from what we had in the Beginning of the Verſe, *viz. and yet is*, which limits their *Wonder* to the Beaſt's actual Exiſtence: And that then in ſome Senſe it may alſo be ſaid, *not to be*; becauſe, as ſoon as it ſhould appear, it would not arrive to its Perfection, but gradually *aſcend*, as was explained, *Chap.* xiii. 1. As for the Expreſſion, *Whoſe Names are not written in the Book of Life*, &c. we had that, *Chap.* xiii 8.

In the next three Verſes we have the Explication of the ſeven Heads, which is one of the moſt perplexed Paſſages of this Prophecy, tho' I muſt own, it is more ſo from the different and jarring Senſes of Expoſitors, than from the Words themſelves. It would be an endleſs Labour to bring them all upon the Field; and would ſavour too much of Diſreſpect, to turn them all off by the Lump. The moſt expedite Method I can think of, for forming a probable Conjecture of the Meaning of theſe Heads, is, firſt to range the whole Paſſage in ſome clear and plain Order, which will aſſiſt to throw off many looſe Thoughts; and then to ſeek the Senſe of the ſeveral Members from other Pieces of holy Prophecy. The Method that offers to us of theſe Verſes, and ſeems to be moſt natural, is this, after the Preface, 1. The Meaning of that Part of the Emblem, *ſeven Heads*, v. 9. 2. The Order in which theſe do exiſt, *v.* 10. 3. The Application of all to the Beaſt, *v.* 11.

9 *And* here is the Mind which hath Wiſdom. The ſeven Heads are ſeven Mountains, on which the Woman ſitteth.

The Introduction we ſee in theſe Words, *And here is the Mind which hath Wiſdom.* We had ſomething like this, *Chap.* xiii. 18. *Here is Wiſdom*: Nor can this differ much from that, and is not in the Original, unleſs we take down the Word, ὧδε, and break it in two; and then, ὦ, is an *Adverb* of *Exclamation*, which is the common Note prefixed to ſome extraordinary Thing; as, *Luke* ix. 41. *O faithleſs Generation!* Rom. xi. 33. *O the Depth both of the Wiſdom and Knowledge of God!* And then the other Part of the Word, δε, is a *diſcretive Conjunction*; but then the Word *here* could have no Place, but all would be an upſtirring Call, not only to the Prophet, but to all the Church in all Ages, to ſearch accurately into the Meaning of what follows, and to point at the Qualification of theſe who are like to be moſt ſucceſful in their Endeavours. Or, if we pleaſe, we may allow this to be one Word; and then it is an *Adverb* either of *Place* or *Time*; for to both I find it applied in Scripture: If of *Time*, the Meaning is, From this Time the wiſe and prudent may ſafely exerciſe their Meditations, to find out the true Meaning of this notable Paſſage, for the Advantage of the Church: If of *Place*, as I find the Generality of Expoſitors incline to take it, then it reſpects the whole of the Paſſage to the Cloſe of the Chapter; As if the *Angel* had prefixed a *N. B.* thereto, and thereby calls all the wiſe and ſerious to imploy themſelves about it. And if we put *Mind* in the Vocative, the Meaning will yet be more eaſy; And ſo it is a Call to the *wiſer*

wiſer to conſider the ſame. I only offer a few Remarks further upon this Preface, 1. This is a Myſtery will not unvail to every overly Reader. 2. Diligence in this Survey, tho' it have a Bit of Curioſity, is not condemned. 3. Tho' the Thing be difficult, yet it is not impoſſible. 4. They are like to be moſt lucky in their Conjectures, who keep cloſeſt to the Words as they ly, and bring their Meaning from other Places of Scripture that may give moſt Light, which we are to endeavour.

The reſt of this Verſe I take up in theſe two, 1. The Explication of theſe Heads. 2. Their Relation to the Woman.

I. The Angel's Explication of the Heads, *The ſeven Heads are ſeven Mountains.* As for the Number *Seven*, I have all along inclined to take it *definitely*; and in many Places we found a Neceſſity to do ſo, from the particular Enumeration of the *Churches*, *Seals*, *Trumpets*, and *Vials*. I am ſtill of that Mind, with reſpect to the *ſeven Heads*; nor do they ſay the contrary, who contend *Seven* to be a Number of Perfection, provided they allow it to be a juſt Number, elſe it could not be perfect. That this Number is certainly definite, the 10. *v.* puts beyond all Queſtion: Nor do I find any refuſe it, but ſuch as would have the Prophecy truckle to their *Schemes*; and are forced to identify the *ſeventh* and *eighth*, the Solyciſm of which we will afterward expoſe. Now why it ſhould be definite, *v.* 10. and indefinite, *v.* 9. when they both refer to the ſame Thing, I have heard no Reaſon. The whole Opinions about this, may be reduced to theſe two, that which placeth an *Allegory* in the Word *Mountains*, and that which makes them *literal*.

Theſe who contend for the *allegorick* Way of Inveſtigating theſe Words, are of different Thoughts: Some underſtand them of the *ſeven Patriarchal Seats*, that were erected in the Chriſtian World, and made Way for the *Pope*, who at length obtained Juriſdiction over them all: But theſe are defeat by others, who prove there were more *Patriarchals* than *ſeven*, and that, even of the *ſeven* they mention, ſome never ſubmitted to the *See* of *Rome*. Others, by theſe ſeven Mountains, underſtand ſeven *Metropolitan* Cities, that were firſt in *Rome Heathen*, and afterwads in *Rome Antichriſtian*: But this is liable to as many Exceptions as the former; for if they mean *Cities* within the *Empire*, as they expreſly ſay, then all of them were ſubject to *Rome*, till *Conſtantinople* or *New Rome* roſe to rival the old One: But if this be meant of great Cities, and next to *Rome*, and co-ordinate amongſt themſelves, then it will be found there were more than ſeven Times ſeven. Others, that I may mention no more, ſay, Theſe Mountains are rather to be underſtood of *Perſons*, than Places; which no doubt is true: But when they come to the Application of them, they put four of them in *Europe*, and but two in *Aſia*, which is much larger, and one in *Africa*; and bring not one Word of Reaſon to ſtrengthen this Diſtribution, which certainly was highly neceſſary, eſpecially ſeeing with as much Reaſon they may be reduced to three. Or, if we beſtow the Character of *Mountain* upon every toping People that are higher than their Neighbours about them, we might find *ſeven*, if not more, out of every one of theſe three Parts of the World.

Such as are for the literal Senſe take a cliver Method to ſhuffle all theſe and many other Thoughts off the Field at once, by this one ſingle Argument, That we muſt not in Reaſon ſeek an *Allegory* in an *Allegory*, otherwiſe we ſhall quickly have an End to all ſolid Interpretation. This Argument is indeed plauſible, and has taken with a great deal, tho' I fear the Progreſs will not be what they give out: For, 1. Even theſe do not ſtick cloſs to the Letter in all the Parts of the Expoſition, nor are they at Pains to favour us with a Reaſon why they leave it in one Part more than another. Here, by the *ſeven Mountains*, they underſtand (and moſt improperly too) the *ſeven Hills* upon which the City of *Rome* is built; tho' I always ſee the Scripture diſtinguiſh betwixt Mountains and Hills, particularly, *Pſal.* cxiv. 4. *The Mountains did skip like Rams, and the little Hills like Lambs.* So that in that Language we are to make as great a Difference betwixt a *Mountain* and a *Hill*, as is betwixt a *Ram*, i. e. a grown Sheep, and a *Lamb*; And ſo indeed in all Languages they are diſtinguiſhed. Yet theſe ſame Authors flee to an *Allegory* in the Explication of *Kings*, and make them to be ſeven ſeveral Sorts of ſucceſſive Governments, in each of which were many Succeſſors in the ſame Dignity, yet only one of theſe had the proper Deſignation of *King*: Here it muſt be owned there is no Propriety of Speech, elſe by a *King* we may indifferently underſtand the *States-General* of the united Provinces, and the *King* of *France*, in their ſeveral Succeſſions; which none in their Wits ever did maintain. I confeſs they ſail near the Wind in this Caſe, who take theſe ſeven Kings for ſo many Perſons immediately ſucceeding one another, as does *Hamond*, &c. beginning the firſt at *Claudius*, and making *Titus* the laſt: But he, and all he is beholden to, are ſo unhappy, as ſupport their Cauſe by no other Ground than this, that *Titus* continued but about two Years, or little more. But what then do they bring for the eighth, but *Domitian*? Yet the eighth was not

come when *John* had the Viſion; tho', according to theſe Authors, *Domitian* baniſhed *John*: Now, according to the Strain of this Prophecy, he muſt be *Antichriſt*, and continue no leſs than One thouſand two hundred and ſixty Years; but here they are loſt, and we leave them. 2. The *ſeven Heads* muſt certainly be the ſame with the Beaſt; the Reaſon is unanſwerable, *The Beaſt carried the Woman*, v. 7. *The Woman ſits upon the Beaſt*, v. 3. And here the Woman *ſits upon the Mountains*, which is but another Word for Heads: And therefore, by the *Beaſt* we are to underſtand the whole of that *Empire*, conſiſting of Place and Perſons; and by Heads, the ſeveral Shapes or Deſignations under which it had paſt; for there is no greater Inconſiſtency to ſay, The *Beaſt* and the *Heads* are the ſame, than to ſay, The *Woman* ſits upon both the *Beaſt* and the *Heads*. This I think ſhould the rather hold, that here we have no Account of any Part of the Beaſt, but its *ſeven Heads*: And therefore the Conſideration of the *Beaſt* is to be reſtricted to the Part mentioned. 3. Theſe *ſeven Heads* are ſaid to be *crown'd*, Chap. xii. 3. Now a Crown is an Emblem of *Majeſty*; and to ſuppoſe ſeven Sovereignties in one City at the ſame Time, is what I preſume ſcarce any will undertake to juſtify, which however muſt be done, if the ſeven Heads in both Places ſignify *Hills* or *Mountains*; for each of them muſt have a ſeveral and ſeparate Sovereignty: And conſequently this cannot be meant of the *ſeven Hills* upon which *Rome* ſtands. 4. By this Clauſe, *The ſeven Heads are ſeven Mountains*, we are neceſſarily to underſtand, the ſeven Heads ſignify *ſeven Mountains*. Now, if we take the *Analogy* of *Head* to ſignify a dull, ſtupid and ſenſleſs Protuberance of the Earth, commonly called an *Hill* or a *Mountain*, we ſhall loſe a great Part of the *Force* of the *Emblem*, and the *Explication* be ſcarce pertinent; becauſe the *Head of a Beaſt*, eſpecially if it has *Horns* (as here) is the Place of its Strength and Terror, and more of its whole Senſes; and, to ſure, a great many other Emblems might be fitter to repreſent an Hill than the Head of a Beaſt fortified with Horns. 5. To take this *literally* for the *ſeven Hills* on which *Rome* ſtood, and from whence they undertake to prove that the *Romiſh* Church is the only *Antichriſt*, will neceſſarily infer, That that *City* did occupy all theſe *Hills*, when this *myſterious Whore* came to her Prime: But this is not ſo much as alledged; yea, it is granted, that by the ſeveral Sackings of that City, before the *Beaſt* that roſe out of the Sea got the Seat of the *Dragon*, no leſs than three of theſe Hills were turned into Heaps. Nor will the adduced Anſwer avail, That it is ſufficient if the City extended to all theſe Mountains when the Prophet had this Viſion: For then in no tolerable Senſe can it be ſaid, The Woman ever ſat upon theſe ſeven Hills, ſeeing ſhe *was not*, when the City ſtood upon them; and at leaſt a Part of them were demoliſhed before ſhe was capable of a Seat. 6. Conſider the weak Authority brought to ſupport this common Notion, of which we would be aſhamed in other Caſes, *viz.* the Expreſſions of a Number of Heathen Poets and Hiſtorians, as *Virgil*, *Horace*, *Ovid*, *Claudian*, &c. who only tell us, that *Rome* ſtood upon *ſeven Hills*. But can we in Honeſty take theſe Facts they relate, tho' true, as the Senſe of the Spirit of God in this Place? eſpecially that we can find other Cities famous for ſeven Hills as well as *Rome*; ſo was *Ravenna* in *Italy*, and ſo is *Avignion* in *France*. Now, why this *Woman*, if it be a *City* built upon *ſeven Hills*, may not be taken for ſome of theſe as well as *Rome*, I ſee not, unleſs it be becauſe *Rome* was firſt the Seat of the *Emperor*, and afterwards of the *Pope*, and ſo much famed by the Poets of theſe Times: And yet it as true, that *Ravenna* had a ſovereign Court for a long Time, and *Avignion* was the Seat of the *Popes* alſo. But not one Word from Scripture is brought to juſtify all this Pudder made about a City ſo wretched upon many Accounts.

Having thus diſproved the literal Interpretation of this Clauſe, there remains one Objection to be removed, *viz.* We ſhould not weaken ſuch a ſolid and evident Argument, and of ſo much Uſe for redarguing *Papiſts*. Anſwer, This has more Show than Force; for it makes not one Whit for the Advantage of the *Papiſts*: And tho' ſome of them have been thereby put to Silence, it matters not; there are other Arguments of more Weight, and liable to no Exception, that will flow from the true Senſe of this Text. I own indeed, this will free the *City* of *Rome*, now the *Pope*'s Seat, from being this Beaſt; but then it will not free the *Church* of *Rome* from being a great Part of the *Woman* that ſits on theſe Mountains: Beſides, it will open a Door for Enlargement of Thought about the Woman; for, if we take theſe *Mountains* literally, ſo muſt we take the City, v. 18. and ſo there is no more Difference betwixt the *Beaſt*, and the *Woman* that ſits thereon, than there is betwixt the *City* of *Rome*, and the *Hills* on which it ſtands; which is manifeſtly to ſtraiten the Deſign of this Prophecy, which will be more plain, when I advance my Thoughts upon this Head, which I ſhall do will all Submiſſion.

I ſhall fetch the Senſe of the Words from Scripture, in theſe few Conſiderations. 1. Nowhere in Scripture can I find the Word *Head* or *Heads* taken for *Mountains* or *Hills*, but always for Superiorities and Rulers, when it is not properly taken for that Part of a Creature we commonly mean thereby. And it is not preſumable this *Angel*, ſent of God to *John*, would reveal Things to him in a Way by which God never ſpoke before, eſpecially that the whole of this *Prophecy* runs in Terms ſo familiar to the *old Prophets*. To this Purpoſe, *David*, ſpeaking to God, ſays, 1 *Chron.* xxix. 11. *Thou art exalted as Head above all.* Jer. xxii. 6. *Thus ſaith the Lord unto the Houſe of* Judah, *Thou art* Gilead *unto me, and the Head of* Lebanon. *Micah* iii. 1, 11. *Hear, O Heads of* Jacob, *and Princes of* Iſrael: *The Heads thereof judge for a Reward.* And indeed, in this Senſe I always find the Word taken, when it is not uſed in the moſt proper Senſe, which I am ſure none will alledge here. 2. The Word *Mountain*, in Scripture, is never taken for the *Foundations* of a City; but, if not properly, it always ſignifies a State or Government, as, *Ezek.* vi. 2. *Set thy Face againſt the Mountains of* Iſrael, *and propheſy againſt them.* And that this was againſt the whole People, is plain from the next Words, *v.* 3. *I will bring a Sword upon you.* Jer. iii. 23. *Truly in vain is Salvation hoped for from the Hills, and the Multitude of Mountains*, i. e. from the Nations about them, that might aſſiſt them againſt the *Chaldeans*. If we join theſe two together, theſe *Heads*, according to Scripture, are *Kings* or *Princes* in the Exerciſe of Sovereignty over great Nations. 3. As in Scripture, *Empires* are under the Notion of *Beaſts*, ſo their Courts or Princes amidſt them come under the Deſignation of *Heads*, Jer. vii. 8, 9. *The Head of* Aſſyria *is* Damaſcus, *and the Head of* Damaſcus *is* Rezin. *The Head of* Ephraim *is* Samaria, *and the Head of* Samaria *is* Remaliah's *Son.* Another Senſe from Scripture I cannot find Ground to affirm, and therefore I chooſe to go in with it, both becauſe, ſo far as I can ſee, it is leſs liable to Exceptions than any of the reſt, and it has more Countenance from the Word of God.

II. The Relation theſe *Mountains* ſtand in to the *Woman, on which the Woman ſitteth*; Or, exactly according to the *Greek, where the Woman ſitteth on, or over them.* I have ſhewed before, that *to ſit* not only implies *Stability*, but *Government*: And ſo we may take the full Senſe of it to be this, This Woman, *the Mother of Harlots*, will fill the Room of ſeven ſeveral *Dynaſties*, or *Empires*, and have Rule over them. Therefore I take this Verſe to contain in Bulk, what we have by Detail in the next; and that theſe ſeven Heads are ſeven ſeveral Empires, not ſo much diſtinct in their Situation, as in the Way and Manner of their Conſtitution; whereof each made Way for another, till out of all their Aſhes ſprung this *Phœnix* of Wickedneſs and Abomination, which is to continue, from firſt to laſt, the Space of a Thouſand two hundred and ſixty Years: And ſo one Place of this Prophecy gives Light to another.

10 And there are ſeven Kings, five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come: And when he cometh, he muſt continue a ſhort Space.

This I take to exhibite to us the *Order* or *Succeſſion* of theſe Heads to one another. Some indeed would have the *Heads* to ſignify both *ſeven Hills* on which *Rome* ſtands; and beſides, *ſeven Kings*. If the *Text* had *alſo* ſaid ſo, I own they would have ſome Plea: But ſeeing we muſt adhere to the Words of the Text, as will be found neceſſary here, there can be no Ground for this. It would appear the *Spirit of God* does direct the *Church* to a very direct Method to know when that *Man of Sin* was to riſe, by ſhewing how many of the *Seven* were over, what to come, that they might look about for the *true Antichriſt*.

We are here to conſider ſome Thoughts of the Learned about this, before we eſtabliſh what we take to be the moſt probable Senſe. Some tell us, Theſe *Mountains* were *permanent* Heads, *viz.* the ſeven Hills upon which the City of *Rome* ſtands; and the Kings are *tranſitory* Heads, which were to ſucceed one another. That the Heads whom they call *permanent* cannot be underſtood of the ſeven Hill of *Rome*, I endeavoured to prove from *v.* 9. Now, I am only to enquire into the Reaſon of this Deſignation, *permanent*; becauſe, ſay they, theſe *ſeven Hills* continued to be the Foundations of that City under all that Succeſſion of Kings, *i. e.* even under the *Pope*: But this is plainly falſe in Fact; for in *Theodoſius*'s Time, *Anno* 349. a great Part of *Rome* was demoliſhed, after which it ſuffered very much by the Diviſion of the *Empire* into the *Eaſtern* and *Weſtern*, their ſeveral *Emperors* contending betwixt themſelves; and then the great Inundations of the Northern Nations ſack'd it very often, ſo that a few of theſe Hills

were imployed by the City, and then I am ſure they were not all the *permanent* Head and conſequently that Notion muſt fall to the Ground.

Next, we would ſee whether they be more happy in their Senſe of the *Kings*. Of this I ſpoke a little on the former Verſe: Here I ſhall be more particular. Some then take *Kings perſonally* for ſeven ſeveral *Emperors* that ſucceed one another, and that the *Sixth* flouriſhed in *John*'s Time: But they fall out about the *ſixth*, which is fixed in the Text, and makes a Variation in the Count. Some, as *Hamond*, make *Veſpaſian* the ſixth, and the five before him to be *Claudius*, *Nero*, *Galba*, *Otho*, and *Vitellius*, and *Titus* the ſeventh, who reigned only two Years. Beſide the Weakneſs of this, diſcovered before, there is this that chokes it; tho' *Veſpaſian* was a great Enemy to the *Jews*, he was not ſo to the *Chriſtians*. And it is very plain, the *Emperor* that governed in *John*'s Time was a great Perſecuter, and baniſhed the Prophet to the *Iſle* of *Patmos*; and ſo it is probable that *Domitian* was Emperor at that Time. This is the common Opinion of both Hiſtorians and Expoſitors: And if, in the Senſe of ſome, *Domitian* was the ſixth, then the five before him were *Galba*, *Otho*, *Vitellius*, *Veſpaſian*, *Titus*, and the ſeventh be *Nerva*, who reigned but about two Years; and the eighth *Trajan*, who ſucceeded the other, *Anno* 98. yet was not he *Antichriſt* in their own Judgment, tho' he was a *Perſecuter*: And therefore this perſonal Notion cannot take Place. Beſides, it ſeems this Number *Seven* is a compleat Enumeration; and ſo there were no Kings before them, and none after the *ſeventh* but *Antichriſt*: Yet we are ſure there were *four* Emperors before *Claudius*, and near *fifty* after *Trajan*.

The next Opinion of the *ſeven Kings* is more common and generally received: It makes them to be ſeven ſeveral Sorts of *Governments* over the Empire of *Rome*; as, *Kings*, *Conſuls*, *Dictators*, *Tribunes*, *Decemvirs*, *Emperors Heathen*, which obtain'd in *John*'s Time, and the ſeven *Chriſtian Emperors* which were to continue but a ſhort Time, after which *Antichriſt* was to riſe. They bring, to countenance this, Scripture-authority; as, *Deut.* xxxiii. 5. *Moſes is called King in* Jeſhurun. *Judges* xvii. 6. *The Rulers of* Edom *are called Kings.* Jer. xxv. 22. *The Magiſtrates of* Tyrus *and* Sidon *are called Kings.* This Opinion is ſo generally received, that it may look ill ſhould any *Proteſtant* offer to attack it: However, this ſhall not make me afraid to ſearch after Truth, nor aſham'd to offer my Grounds, why I cannot go in with this Senſe. But, before I enter on the Conſideration of this Opinion, it will be needful to conſider theſe Texts of Scripture on which they build it, and ſee whether there be Ground from them for their Concluſion; and if not, then we may uſe the more Freedom with the Superſtructure.

The ſhorteſt and cleareſt Method is, to lay down the common Notion of a *King*, which I ſhall take in the largeſt Acceptation, thus, *A King is the ſupreme Ruler over one or mo Nations, without any Colleague or Equal.* I am content to be corrected if this be diſproven, and think it can be eaſily made out; 1. That a King is *ſupreme*: For, who can be equal with a King, but a King? Otherwiſe there ſhould not be one, but two or more; And conſequently, the Government being ſhared amongſt them, none of them ſhould be ſupreme: Nor was it ever lucky for a Nation when their Government was thus in Participation; for it never fail'd to produce inteſtine Jars, ready to pull the whole Conſtitution aſunder. Tho' I do not refuſe ſometimes a King has been obliged to admit a *Copartner*; yet ſtill I affirm, the People were rarely, if ever, happy under both. And, which flows from this, 2. That this King be *one*, no more can poſſibly bruik at a Time. The old Saying holds, *The Throne and the Marriage-Bed are impatient of Rivals*: In this Senſe the Kingly Government differs from all other Forms of Government, as *Ariſtocracy* or *Democracy*. And here I can challenge any to prove from Scripture ever any of theſe came under the Name of *Kings*: And if ſo, then it muſt be abſurd to underſtand them thus in one ſingle Text. As for the Texts adduced, I ſee not how they do it: But a ſhort View of them will clear this. As for *Moſes*, I never heard any ſay he had a Fellow in the civil Goverment: *Subalterns* indeed he had, both for his own and the People's Eaſe. As for the Kings of *Edom*, they did not all, nay, nor two of them, reign at the ſame Time, but one after another; for the Succeſſion is moſt pointedly accounted for in the Place quoted, and Verſes following. The laſt, which they think the ſtrongeſt, will make leaſt for their Purpoſe: For we find that *Tyre* had a King in a moſt proper Senſe, 2 *Chron.* ii. 3. and his Name is condeſcended on to be *Hiram*; and the ſame may be ſaid for *Zidon*. Now, the Scripture affording no Help to this Senſe, it is evident we are not to combate expreſs Texts, but the *Comments* of them that would expreſs theſe Texts to ſupport their Schemes. I ſhall next offer a few Conſiderations from the given Senſe, to ſhew how it deſtroys itſelf.

1. We cannot find five diſtinct Forms of Government in *Rome* before Emperors were eſtabliſhed by *Julius Ceſar*, a few Years before the Birth of Chriſt; for in the Space of Seven hundred Years, we can only make two Sorts of Government in *Rome*, viz. that of

Kings

Kings for Two hundred and fifty Years from the Beginning of that Nation; and that of a *Senate* for the reſt. As for *Collegiate Conſuls, Dictators, Tribunes*, &c. they all had their Authority from the *Senate*, and were accountable to them, at leaſt to the *People*, and were changed annually for the Space of Four hundred and fifty Years. In all that Period of Time, their Government, according to the beſt Authors, was partly *Ariſtocratical*, and partly *Democratical*: So that here we have only two diverſe Forms of Government, and *Emperors* muſt be the third. To ſpeak otherwiſe, would engulph us in inextricable Difficulties; For to make a Government alter its Nature every Time the legiſlative Authority think meet to alter the Executors from one Denomination to another, eſpecially while all of them are accountable to their Conſtituents, would make a moſt unneceſſary Multiplication: Beſides, ſhould we allow this, it will mar all their Deſign; For the *Triumviers* in their Time had as much Power as any of the reſt, while the People and Senate kept the ſupreme Power in in their Hands, and ſo there will be ſix Forms of Government before the Time of *Julius Ceſar*: And further, it is certain there were Conſuls all the while that the other Executors were imployed; ſome for War only, as the *Tribunes*; and ſome for both Peace and War, as the *Dictators*.

2. As we find many Difficulties in the *five* Sorts of Government before the *Imperial* obtain'd, we will not find fewer in the *ſixth* that followed. All agree that the *Imperial* Government was the *ſixth*; but then they differ in this, that ſome make the *Heathen Emperors* the *ſixth*; and ſome ſay, All the *Emperors*, whether *Heathen* or *Chriſtian*, were contain'd in the *ſixth*. The Difficulty that preſſeth the *firſt* of theſe is this, that *Antichriſt* muſt have riſen, yea, and been at his Height ſhortly after the *Chriſtian* Emperors fell, which was to fall out about the Year 470. which yet they were never able to make out. Beſides, it ſeems, when the *Spirit* of God is only ſpeaking of Models of Civil Government, as themſelves own, we are to think, that tho' the Adminiſtration was the ſame, *viz.* by *Emperors*, yet the *Form* ſhould not be *diverſified* becauſe of the Difference in *Religion*. If this Ground ſhould hold, we will find more Reaſon ſtill to diſtinguiſh theſe Forms of Government: For if *Conſtantine*, who was Chriſtian, and ſucceeded to the Empire 306. make the *ſeventh* Head, becauſe he was Chriſtian, then, by that ſame Reaſon, *Julian*, who ſucceeded *Anno* 361. muſt make the *eighth*, becauſe he was *Heathen*; And then, reaſoning after the ſame Manner, *Valens*, who ſucceeded *Anno* 375. muſt make a *ninth* Head, becauſe he was a bitter *Arian*, and ſo made a very great Alteration in *Religion*.

Others, ſeeing the Hardſhips attend this Opinion to be unanſwerable, make the whole *Emperors* to conſtitute this *ſixth* King: But, becauſe they are at a Loſs where to find the *ſeventh* Form of *Roman* Government to introduce the *Pope*, make the *Pope* himſelf to be both the *ſeventh* and the *eighth*; and they are pleaſed (I think) very raſhly to reaſon againſt the *eighth*, tho' it be plain in the Text, and ſay, There cannot be an *eighth*, becauſe the *ſeventh* is the laſt, tho' this be not ſaid in the Text either. I cannot away with ſuch Expoſitions as grate ſo hard upon the Text; I ſhould think it more Honeſty to acknowledge Ignorance, than thwart an expreſs Scripture: Nor do I ſee what more is needful to confute this Opinion.

There are many diſſatisfied with this Freedom, who own that the *Imperial* Government does indeed conſtitute the *ſixth* Head, or *King*, and will not allow it to be called the *ſeventh*, when it changed Religions: And further own, That the *Pope* cannot be the *ſeventh*, becauſe he is called expreſly the *eighth*, and ſo of Neceſſity there muſt be found a *ſeventh* betwixt the *ſixth* and him; and they could think of none elſe but the barbarous Kingdoms of the *Goths, Oſtrogoths, Vandals* and *Lombards*, that overrun the *Empire* for ſome Time, even till the Pope fairly roſe out of the Waters. This is the lateſt and moſt refined Notion upon this Head: But I would fain remember them, according to their Principles, the whole *ſeven* Heads or *Kings* were to be *Roman*; and therefore this of the *barbarous Nations* can be none of them. And if they can be prevail'd with to borrow a Head at a Pinch from an extraneous People, to make up their Number; why might they not as reaſonably yield that ſome of the Five, before *John* had this Viſion, were not *Roman* either? For the ſame Reaſons will hold for both, and then I think they had been nearer Truth.

In this Verſe I ſhall, 1. In general, view the Expoſition of the ſeven Heads or Mountains. 2. Notice the Diſtribution thereof in three Claſſes.

1. In general, there is the Interpretation of the Heads or Mountains, *There are ſeven Kings*. I ſee no Difficulty in the Reading; for the Conjunction betwixt the *Mountains* and the *Kings*, ſays plainly both are meant of the *Heads*, with this Difference, that when he called them *Mountains*, the Deſign was, to ſhew *John* that the Heads were Emblems of very great Kingdoms; And by calling them *ſeven*, is to aſſure us they were different one from another. That here the *Heads* are called *Kings*, is to ſhew the Na-

ture of their Government; and by the Numbring, to teach us they were to be diverſe in their Conſtitutions from other; and ſo the Meaning is, They ſignify ſeveral Royal Dignities, differing in Succeſſion, as well as Conſtitution, from one another. That the Word *Kings* in Scripture bears this, is very plain from *Daniel*, Chap. vii. 17. *Theſe great Beaſts, which are four, are four Kings which ſhall riſe out of the Earth; and the fourth Beaſt ſhall be the fourth Kingdom upon Earth, which ſhall be diverſe from all Kingdoms.* So that the ſeven Kings are *ſeven* Kingdoms, diverſe from one another.

2. Their Diſtribution into Claſſes, whereof *One* was *preſent* at that Time, *Five* had *fallen* before, and *One* was to *come* afterwards. I ſhall conſider them in the Order propoſed, tho' it be ſomewhat different from the Method in the Text, becauſe the Underſtanding of what was then in *John*'s Time will help to the Knowledge of what was *before*, and alſo of what was to *follow*.

(1.) *One is*, i. e. *One* of the *Kingdoms*, which could be none elſe but the *Empire of Rome*, that obtained in *Domitian*'s Time, and then the capital Kingdom of the whole World. It had been growing about 700 Years under *Kings* and *Senates*, till the Reign of *Julius Ceſar*, who is ſaid to have ſubdued 300 Nations. This made a very great Acceſſion to the *Empire*, and it had loſt nothing till *John* had this Viſion; for it extended its Limits to the moſt Parts of *Europe*, *Aſia* and *Africa*, the only known Parts of the Earth.

This *Kingdom* will be of particular Uſe to lead us to the reſt in Debate; for, as I ſaid, all the *ſeven* were great, and almoſt equal in Extent, at leaſt paramount to all other *known* Kingdoms, which will not allow us to take up with any one *Empire* in its Growth, and ſeveral Steps to its Height. It is to be further noticed, in theſe great Kingdoms which preceeded *Rome*, we will find but a very inconſiderable Part of *Europe* under any Conſideration: For *France* is ſaid, before that Time, to have had more than 200 ſeveral Sorts of Dynaſties, or ſmall Governments, and theſe very rude and barbarous; *Spain*, till of late, had twelve ſeveral Kingdms, beſides Principalities, all ruled by petty Sovereigns; A great Part of *Germany* was Wood, and the Inhabitants under a vaſt Number of Kings; *England* had *ſeven* at the ſame Time; And *Scotland*, after many Turns, was reduced to *two* Kingdoms: The like may be ſaid of moſt of the *European Nations*, that make a great Figure this Day. I am ready to think, the not conſidering of theſe Things, has moved Expoſitors to talk ſo much of the Empire of *Rome*, as if that Part of the World, called *Europe*, had been the *Theatre* of theſe many great Actions; and that we are not to go out of it to ſeek after this *Mother of Abominations*, or her *Paramours* in another Place; and that the Enlargement of *Chriſt's Kingdom* is to be pin'd down to this *Weſtern* and *Northern* Part of the World; Tho' it be certain there never was a great Kingdom, whoſe principal Seat was in *Europe*, till firſt the *Greeks*, and then the *Romans*, learned from the *Aſiatick* Powers to project an *Univerſal Monarchy*: So that, when we enlarge our View, we muſt ſearch for theſe *five Kings* ſomewhere elſe than in this *Quarter* of the World; tho' I am ſtill apt to believe, all theſe Kingdoms had ſome Part of *Europe* under their Power, tho' perhaps the chief Seat of their Kingdom might be elſewhere. I have only this further to note, that I do not think the Deciſion of the Intendment of the *Spirit of God*, in this Part of the Prophecy, depends upon the finding out of the five Kingdoms which preceeded that of *Rome*, eſpecially that the Hiſtories thereof are periſhed for the moſt Part; and what yet remains, eſpecially before the *Greek Empire*, is ſo blended with *Fable*, that little Regard can be had to them: And what we find in Scripture, is only advanced incidently, in ſo far as is neceſſary to clear the Hiſtory of the *Iſraelites*.

(2) *Five are fallen.* This is the *ſecond Claſs*, and reſpects the *Time paſt*, not only before the *Viſion* made to the *Prophet*, but alſo before the *Roman Empire*, at leaſt before it arrived to its Height. Here I only name them, being afraid to be poſitive in theſe Affairs, eſpecially, tho' I ſhould, it can add ſo little Light to the *Prophecy*; only we are ſure, there were very great and potent Kingdoms in the World of old, as *Aſſyria*, *Media*, *Perſia*, *Grecia* and *Syria*; all which were *famous* for their Extent and Proweſs, and no leſs *infamous* for their Enmity to the People of God. Tho' it ſhould be found that theſe are not the preciſe *Five* here meant, yet it will not ſpoil the Senſe of this Part of the Prophecy, tho' *Egypt* ſhould come in the Room of ſome of them, ſeeing it fixeth at the *ſixth*: And the other five being gone, we have little further Concern about them, unleſs they fall afterwards more directly in our Way.

(3.) *The other is not yet come: And when he cometh, he muſt continue a ſhort Space.* This is the *third* Claſs, and points out the *ſeventh* of theſe *Kings* at that Time to come, and further noted from the *Shortneſs* of his Continuance. This I think, from what is ſaid, aſſures us it will be a Kingdom, great and diverſe from the *Romiſh*, and poſterior to it, and be the immediate Harbinger of *Antichriſt*. Nor can I take it to be any

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Thing elſe than that Flood of *Barbarians*, that in a few Years made themſelves Maſters of the *Weſtern Empire*, and a great Part of *Africa* and *Aſia*. At the ſame Time the *Saracens* came North thorow *Palaſtine*, *Syria*, and other Nations that belonged to the *Eaſtern Empire*; theſe continued to infeſt their Neighbours, and indeed did effectually break this great *Empire* to Pieces, that it never afterwards recovered itſelf. The *Goths* began about the Beginning of the *fifth* Century, and kept Poſſeſſion of *Italy*, and a great many other Places, for near an Hundred Years; and after them the *Lombards*, for near two hundred more: Yet all this was but a ſhort Space, in Compariſon of the Continuance of the ſixth King, which laſted about Eleven hundred Years from its firſt Riſe to the Fall of the *Weſtern Empire*, and about an Hundred more before the *Eaſtern* was broken by the *Saracens*; of which we ſpoke at Length, on *Chap.* xiii. from *v.* 11. and downwards.

11 And the Beaſt that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the ſeven, and goeth into Perdition.

In the Application we have to notice, 1. The Subject to which this Explication is applied. 2. The Order of the Succeſſion of this Beaſt to the other ſeven. 3. The Affinity of this eighth to the other ſeven.

1. The Subject to which it is applied, *The Beaſt that was, and is not, and goeth into Perdition.* The ſeveral Terms of this were explained, *v.* 8. whence it is evident, that by this ſtill the ſame *Empire* is to be underſtood, as growing by Degrees and Succeſſion unto the *Man of Sin*, or what is called *Antichriſt*, which was only to have a new Model and Form different from all the reſt. The Conjunction καὶ, *and*, ſeems plainly to point at this, that the former *ſeven* were to land in this Beaſt, ſo infamous for its Spring out of *Hell*, and obſervable in its Exit to go into *Perdition*.

2. The Order of the Succeſſion of this Beaſt, *Even he is the Eighth.* It is not poſſible then he could be the *ſeventh*; for it would make the greateſt Blunder imaginable, to call the *ſeventh* the *eighth*: For, why might not we as well ſay the *ſeventh* is the *ſixth*? &c. and ſo at laſt make one Head of all the *eight*. It ſeems then indiſputable, there is no great Difference betwixt the *Beaſt* and the *Heads*; for here, what is called the *eighth Head*, is deſigned the *Beaſt*: Therefore, it muſt follow, that the Matter of the *Empire* is the ſame, both as to People and Place; and that the great Difference betwixt the Heads, is the ſeveral *Forms* and Models of Government, agreeable to the Succeſſion of theſe ſeveral *Monarchies*, of which we ſpoke before. Therefore the *eighth* Head can be meant of none elſe but the *Popiſh* and *Mahometan* Powers, that ſucceeded to the *ſeven* ſeveral *Empires*, that, in their Time, were Maſters of the far greater Part of the known World. Theſe, tho' diverſe enough from one another, are *One*, as to their Power and Place; and, as has been proven, much a-kin in their *Principels*. Theſe two make up the *eighth Head*, and was the *Beaſt that was*, and *was not* in *John*'s Time fully ripe, yet was a-hatching, but now is produced, and come ſome Centuries ago to its ακμὴ, and do conſtitute what in Scripture is called *Antichriſt*, *Babylon*, *the Man of Sin*, and *Son of Perdition*; which, from its firſt Spring, upon the Decay of the *Barbarous* Government the *ſeventh Head*, was to continue One thouſand two hundred and ſixty Years.

3. The Affinity of this *eighth Head* to all the *ſeven*, *And is of the Seven.* Some here, without any Ground, put in the Word *One*, and the Senſe of it to be *One of the Seven*; And, by a ſecond Inference, as unjuſt as the firſt, make it to be the very *Seventh*. The firſt Notion, That it is *One* of the *Seven*, is ſo croſs to the Nature of the Text, as well as common Senſe, that it can never be allowed. As for the next, That *it is the Seventh*, is every Whit as ſenſleſs; for no Reaſon can be given, why it may not be the *Sixth*, *Fifth*, &c. as well as the *Seventh*: Yea plainly, it is not any of them in particular, yet it participates of all in general, and as much like one as another. That it ſhares of the common Nature of them all, I illuſtrate by a few Generals; *1ſt*, It is of them, as to the Likeneſs of its Riſe and Production, without any Direction or Approbation from God; they were purely Kingdoms of this World, all of them eſtabliſhed by the Power and Policy of Men. 2. It is of them, as to their Oppoſition to the Cauſe and People of of God; all of them were Heart-Enemies thereto, and violent Perſecuters of his Church. *3dly*, It is of them, as to their *Principles*, and *Practices* wholly ſuperſtitious and idolatrous. *4thly*, It is like to them, as to the Manner of their Government, according to the Maxims of the moſt refin'd Tyranny. *5thly*, It is of them, as to their Judgments; all of them fell by the heavy Wrath of God; and ſo will this Eighth, when God's Time is come.

We are to next to engage the Explication of the Horns, in the next 3 Verſes; where I notice, 1. The Interpretation of the Horns, with their then and after State, *v.* 12. 2. Their Harmony, *v.* 13. 3. Their Exerciſe; and the Reaſon of its Iſſue.

12 And the ten Horns which thou ſaweſt, are ten Kings, which have received no Kingdom as yet; but receive Power as Kings one Hour with the Beaſt.

Here is, 1. The Interpretation of the Horns. 2. Their Condition when the Apoſtle had this Signification given him. 3. Their After-ſtate.

I. The Interpretation; where we would notice, 1. The Emblem. 2. The Number. And, 3. The Signification.

1. The Emblems, *Horns*: This we had frequently before, *Chap.* v. 6. *Chap.* xii. 3. *Chap.* xiii. 1. Yet, in Regard there are but *ſeven Heads*, and here *ten Horns*, it may be worth the Enquiry, How theſe ten Horns were diſpoſed on theſe ſeven Heads? Some would have each of the *ſeven Heads* to have *ten Horns*, and thereby increaſe the Number to *Seventy* inſtead of *Ten*, which I think cannot hold. Tho' I own it is ſaid of the *Dragon*, Chap. xii. *He had ten Horns*; and ſo of the Beaſt, *Chap.* xiii. 1. yet the ſecond Beaſt, *Chap.* xiii. 11. had only *two Horns*. Theſe are Difficulties are not eaſily to be acccounted for: However, we would remember, the *ten Horns* on the *Dragon*, i. e. *Heatheniſm*, were Parts of that Body, not then erected in Kingdoms; and therefore it is ſaid there were no Crowns upon theſe Horns; But when the Beaſt roſe out of the Sea, *i. e.* the *Papal Kingdom*, then theſe *Horns* got *Crowns*. But, when the Beaſt roſe out of the Earth, *i. e.* the *Mahometan Kingdom*, it had only two Horns. The Difficulty remains about them; nor do I ſee any other Way to ſatisfy for that, than to affirm, theſe two Horns are not particular Powers, diſtinct from others in their Subject, but two Powers united in the ſame Subject, *viz.* the *Prophetical* and *Regal* in the ſame Perſon; eſpecially, that it is not ſaid, there were two Crowns upon theſe Horns. And now, that all the Idolatry of the *Dragon* fell to the Share of the *Pope* and *Mahomet*, ſo likewiſe did their Principles; and conſequently, theſe Horns muſt be ſought in theſe two. This I take to be the moſt eaſy and unſtrain'd Senſe, tho' I cannot ſay it ſatisfies perfectly: But, to confirm this, the *ten Horns* muſt be peculiar to the *eighth Head*; ſo that, tho' in the former *Viſions* there might be *ten Horns*, it was only to tell *John* what was compriſed in *one Head*, was afterwards to be divided into *ten Horns*.

2. The Number, *Ten*. 'Tis yielded on all Hands, that *Daniel*'s *ten Horns*, Chap. vii. 24. are to be underſtood *definitely*, yea, the Context pleads the ſame; and ſo, I think, they are in all Reaſon to be underſtood here, altho' we have not ſuch a pointed Order of them as in *Daniel*. I cannot believe, with the *Papiſts*, that the ſame *ten Kings* are meant in both Places: The Reaſon I give is, becauſe *Daniel*'s Kings were to preceed the Coming of Chriſt, as the beſt Expoſitors think; whereas theſe *Ten* are to ſucceed the *ſeven Heads*, and be contemporary with the *eighth*, as is very plain from this Context.

3. Their Interpretation, *Ten Kings*: I ſee not how we can leave the eſtabliſhed Senſe of *Kings*, on *v.* 10. that they are not to be underſtood of ſo many individual Perſons, but for ſo many different Succeſſions in Regal Power; with this *Proviſo*, That what Territories belonged to *one* of the *Heads*, is diſtribute among the *Ten Horns*, or *Kings*; ſo that they have no more amongſt them all, than what *one* of the *Heads* did command alone. The only Difficulty I ſee is, Whether theſe *ten Kings* are to be *contemporary*, or in *Succeſſion* one to another? Some take the one Side, and ſome another. I think, the Context will be the beſt *Arbiter*, which ſays, they are all of them *contemporary* with the *Beaſt*, for *they receive Power one Hour with the Beaſt*, and with one another. *v.* 13. *Theſe have one Mind, and ſhall give their Power and Strength unto the Beaſt.* And it is not ſuppoſable how this could be, if they were not *contemporary*. This may be further cleared from theſe Topicks; 1. They are to be of one Mind, and join together in their Deſigns and Counſels. 2. All the *Ten* ſhall fight againſt the *Lamb* by united Force. 'Tis true, the Strength of theſe may be evaded, by telling, 'tis ſufficient they follow the ſame Meaſures, tho' they were in Succeſſion to one another. And therefore, I add, 3. From *v.* 16. *The ten Horns which thou ſaweſt upon the Beaſt, ſhall hate the Whore*, &c. Now, were they not *contemporary*, only one of them could exiſt at once, when the Whore was to be deſtroyed; and conſequently it ſhould be ſaid that the *tenth* Horn ſhould hate the *Whore*, and not the other *Nine*, which, according to their Notion of a Succeſſion, muſt be fallen before this Time: And ſo I conclude, all the *Ten* are to exiſt together, and at once.

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The Application of this is difficult: However, that ſomething may be ſaid, conſonant to the Scope of the Place, and the Meaning of the *Beaſt*, I think, the *ten Kings* may be partly *Popiſh*, and partly *Mahometan*; but whether there muſt be an equal Diviſion or Share to each, is what I have found no Ground to determine. The Reaſon why I entertain this Thought, is, Becauſe, by the *eighth Beaſt* or *Head*, both *Popery* and *Mahometaniſm* are to be underſtood, as we proved before; and conſequently a Part of theſe *Kings* are to be ſought out of that Part of the Earth where *Mahomet*'s Deluſions prevail. I ſhall not venture to offer a certain Account of theſe *ten Kings*; but I am ſure it will be no hard Matter to find *ten Kings* that are equally Enemies to the *Lamb*, and Friends either to *Mahomet* or the *Pope*; In *Aſia* and *Africa*, in *Mahomet*'s Intereſt, there are the *Grand Turk*, *Mogul*, *Chan* of *Tartary*, *King* of *Morocco*, &c. In *Europe*, the *Emperor* of *Germany*, Kings of *Spain*, *France*, *Poland*, &c. But whether theſe, or ſome that have fallen off from the Pope already, as *Britain*, *Denmark*, *Sweden*, &c. are to come in the Computation, I cannot aſſert.

II. The then State of the Kings, *Which have received no Kingdom as yet*; Or according to the Original, *Who have not yet taken Kingdom*: Which denotes the Manner of their *Riſe*, not by *fair Choice*, nay, nor by the Approbation of God, but by *Force* of Arms and *Violence*. A Word to the ſame Purpoſe we have aſcribed to the Saints, with this Difference, they had a Promiſe, and therefore a Divine Right to it, *Dan.* vii. 18. *The Saints ſhall take the Kingdom*, i. e. by Force they ſhall poſſeſs themſelves thereof. The plain Senſe of this Clauſe is, theſe Kings were not then in Being when *John* had the *Viſion*, nor were they to exiſt till the *ſeven Heads* were fallen, and the *eighth* was riſen up. 'Tis true, the Providence of God is concerned in a very particular Manner about theſe Kingdoms: 'Tis alſo true, that the Word properly ſignifies an *Inveſtiture* in theſe Dignities, which to me points out the arrogated Power of both the *Pope* and *Mahomet*, in aſſigning Kingdoms at their Pleaſure; That this has been their Cuſtom, is evident to any in the leaſt acquaint with their Hiſtory, and will be more plain from the

III. A Prophecy of their After-ſtate; Where, 1. The Certainty that theſe Kingdoms would exiſt. 2. The Time when.

1. The Certainty of theſe Kingdoms, *They ſhall receive Power as Kings*. The *Angel* foretold it in the Name of God, and ſo it was not doubted by *John*, nor muſt it be by us; for this is eſtabliſhed by the irreverſible Decree of Heaven: And that it is ſaid, Their Power is *as Kings*, will not ſay they were not to be Kings; for we proved before, that this Word, which ſeems to denote only Similitude, does alſo ſignify Identity; yet, it muſt be confeſt, by the Addition of ὡς, ſomething is to be underſtood, which I take to be diſcriminating of theſe Kings, under the Emblem of *Horns*, from theſe ſignified by *Heads*, in Compariſon of which they were but ſo many Images or Repreſentations, becauſe the whole *Ten* poſſeſſed no more but what *one* of the *Heads* had before.

2. The Time when, *One Hour*. Some think this to denote the Continuance of the *ten Kings*, and ſo they were to reign but a very ſhort Time with the Beaſt; The Reaſon they give, is, Becauſe the *ſeventh Head* was to laſt *but a ſhort Space*, v. 10. and they take this *Hour* to be explicative of that: But they ſhould conſider theſe *ten Kings* are not to be in the Time of the *ſeventh*, but of the *eighth Head*; and that by *Hour* we are to underſtand a *ſhort Time*, but not ſtrictly what we mean by an *Hour*, as *Philem.* 15. *He departed for a Seaſon*, originally *an Hour*, and ſo it is often underſtood in Scripture. But neither will this do; for *Antichriſt* is to continue One thouſand two hundred and ſixty Years, which is no ſhort Space, and is to fight with the *Lamb* all that Time, as we have ſeen before; and theſe Kings are to ſubſiſt longer, even till they deſtroy the Whore: So that they will pull down what they built up.

Others, and I think with more Reaſon, render the Words, *They ſhall receive Power at, or about the ſame Hour with the Beaſt*. There are Abundance of Inſtances to juſtify this, that rather the *Beginning* than *Continuance* of their Kingdoms is here pointed at; eſpecially that it is in the *Accuſative*: So, *John* iv. 52. *The Fever left him about the ſeventh Hour*; And, *Acts* x. 3. *And he ſaw in a Viſion evidently about the ninth Hour of the Day*: And then the Meaning is, Theſe Kings would get their Sovereignties much about a Time with the Beaſt. To fortify this, ſome think, there is an *Elypſis* of the Word *Power* in the Cloſe of the Verſe, and when ſupplied, it will read thus, *They ſhall receive Power at the ſame Seaſon or Time, among the Power or Authority of the Beaſt*. We often find the *Preposition* μετα ſignify *after*, *among*: As, *John* vi. 43. *Murmure not among your ſelves*. Luke xxiv. 5. *Why ſeek ye the Living among the Dead?* And thus it not only ſhews the *Beginning of theſe Kingdoms*,

but that they would be mixed with the *eighth Head*, and probably were not to riſe all at the ſame Time, but in ſome certain Decurſe of Years eſtabliſhed of God.

13 Theſe have one Mind, and ſhall give their Power and Strength unto the Beaſt.

Their Harmony appears in their Counſel, and Concurrence with the Beaſt.

1. The Unanimity of their Counſel, *They have one Mind*: γνώμην is nowhere in Scripture rendred *Mind* but here; for it is always turned *Counſel* or *Judgment*, 1 Cor. vii. 25, 40. *I give my Judgment*; *After my Judgment*: And ſo it ſhews their Harmony, not only amongſt themſelves, but with the *Beaſt*; which is not ſo to be underſtood, as if there were no Jars or Diſcrepancy among them, or betwixt ſome of them and the Beaſt: It is ſufficient they join Counſel together againſt Chriſt and his *Kingdom*, which all of them have done hitherto, and will, we are ſure, continue to do, *till the Word of God be fulfilled*. As for the Conſent of Principles and Maxims betwixt *Papiſts* and *Mahometans*, ſee on *Chap.* xiii. 'Tis very plain, all the *Popiſh* and *Mahometan Kings* have laid their whole Meaſures for advancing their ſeveral idolatrous Principles and Practices, tho' ſometimes they alſo diſcord amongſt themſelves.

2. Their Concurrence with the Beaſt, *They ſhall give their Power and Strength unto the Beaſt*. As for the Term *Beaſt*, I preſume, by this Time, it is well known; nor are the other two Strangers in this Prophecy. The one, rendred *Power*, ſignifies *Force* or Strength, and may be underſtood of Men, or Money, or both: The other, turned *Strength*, properly ſignifies *Authority*, and may refer to theſe Conceſſions made by theſe Kings to the Beaſt, in inlarging his Prerogative, which hath been done with a Witneſs, in both the *Papal* and *Mahometan* Empires, that at Length they ſkrewed them *above all that is called God, or is worſhipped*. The only Word we have not met with before is, διδωμι *to give*. Some think it ſignifies to *diſtribute*, as Conquerors do Spoils; Others, it ſignifies to *ſurrender*, as Cities do, when they cannot longer hold out. I cannot think the laſt is here meant, tho' ſome ſet up for it; and I chooſe to go in with the other, and the rather I find the Word ſo taken, *Luke* xi. 22. *Divideth his Spoils*: So that it is a voluntary Upgiving, without Conſtraint; for any Victory the *Beaſt* could have over them, was more by Fraud than Force; and we may look upon this as no ſmall Part of the *Sorceries* above ſaid. However, 'tis plain, this *Beaſt* looks gay in borrowed Plumes.

14 Theſe ſhall make War with the Lamb, and the Lamb ſhall overcome them: For he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, and they that are with him, are called, and choſen, and faithful.

In their Concurrence are, 1. Their Exerciſe. 2. The Iſſue. 3. The Grounds thereof.

1. Their Exerciſe, *Theſe ſhall make War with the Lamb*. This is no more than might be juſtly expected from their Principles and Combination, mentioned above. We need not inſiſt on this War, after what is ſaid on *Chap.* xii. of the War betwixt *Michael* and the *Dragon*; of the *Beaſt's* War with the *Saints*, on *Chap.* iii. 7. for there, as well as here, their Conflict was with the *Lamb* and his *Members*. Some, by *War* here with the Saints, underſtand *Perſecution*, *Error*, and *rampant Wickedneſs*; and, by *War* with the *Lamb*, mean the *Invaſion* of his *threefold Office*, as has been done in a moſt eminent Manner by both the *Pope* and *Mahomet*: Yet I think we may alſo extend it to open continued Hoſtilities, and is what we had before again and again.

2. The Iſſue of this War, *The Lamb ſhall overcome them*. This was no ſingle Engagement, but a laſting War, with various Succeſs for a long Time, for it will continue no leſs than One thouſand two hundred and ſixty Years; and then, behold the Event, it is ſaid, *Chap.* xiii. 7. the Beaſt was *to overcome the Saints*; but that here we read of their *Captain General*, it is ſaid, *He ſhall overcome them*: It is only in Chriſt that *Saints are more than Conquerors*, for he is a Man of War; nor were his Enemies ever able to ſtand before him. Beſides, there is a twofold Victory, the one *temporal* and *corporal*, the other *ſpiritual* and *eternal*: The *Beaſt* and his *Allies* may be Conquerors in the firſt Senſe, but they ſhall be vanquiſhed in the latter; Yet even the *Lamb* will overcome the *Beaſt* and theſe *Kings* in Time, and externally in the Eyes of the World, to their Shame, and the Conſolation of all theſe that adhere to the Intereſt of Chriſt.

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A Queſtion is ſtarted here, *How will this Victory be gain'd?* I find it indifferently anſwered; while ſome ſay, it will be by the Sword of his Mouth, *i. e. the Preaching of the Goſpel*; Others ſay, It will be by *downright Force* and Strength of Hand: But I think, if we couple both theſe, the Anſwer will be the more full. This will caſt up more plainly afterwards.

3. The Grounds of this Iſſue, in the reſt of the Verſe, which are two; the

(1.) Is taken from the Quality of the Lamb, *For he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings.* To be ſure, the *Lamb* and this *King of Kings*, is the ſame: 'Tis true, the Application of theſe Metaphors are upon different Grounds. Why he is called a *Lamb*, we heard before, *Chap.* v. 6. There are alſo Reaſons to juſtify this Deſignation, *Lord of Lords*, &c. which prove his Divinity: As, 1. His Matchleſneſs: He has no created Equal; yea, *he counted it no Robbery to be equal with God*; and therefore, all the Perfections and Attributes in Scripture aſcribed to God, are eſſential to him, as *Infinite, Eternal, Unchangeable, in his Being*, &c. 2. His *Sovereignty* over all: Even the greateſt Kings are his Subjects, and can have no Power which he gives not; nor can they exerciſe it one Moment longer than he pleaſeth: For, as *Mediator*, John xvii. 2. *He has Power over all Fleſh.* From this it is plain, all theſe *ten* Kings are in actual Rebellion, while they fight againſt him. 3. His Right and Title: All the Power of the *Beaſt* and his *Horns* is by Uſurpation, but the Power that the Lamb has is *juſt* and *right*, for it is eſſential to him as God; and, as *Mediator*, he has it by the eternal Counſel betwixt the Father and him. This is expreſly ſaid, *Eph.* i. 22. *He hath put all Things under his Feet, and gave him to be Head over all Things to the Church.* In both theſe it may be ſaid, in the moſt proper Senſe, his Title and Right are *indefeaſible*, if that Word have any Senſe in it.

(2.) Reaſon is from the Quality of his Inſtruments, *They that are with him are Called, and Faithful, and Choſen.* Some make a *Parentheſis* in this Verſe, comprehending theſe two Clauſes, *The Lamb ſhall overcome them, for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings*: And then they make this Part of the Verſe to read with the firſt Part thus, *Theſe ſhall make War with the Lamb, and them that are with him*, &c. To be ſure this is Truth, but in this Place it has no Ground; for the Conſtruction is altered from the *Genitive* with a *Preposition*, to a *Nominative*, which quite overthrows this Piece of Curioſity: And ſo we are to take it in the ſame Senſe with *Chap.* xii. 7. where they are called the *Angels of* Michael, *i. e.* theſe Inſtruments he is pleaſed to uſe, not from any want of intrinſick Sufficiency to overcome all his and his People's Enemies, but he is graciouſly pleaſed ſo far to own, as to imploy them in this great Piece of Righteouſneſs, that ſo they might have a Share in the Honour and Satisfaction. It is queſtioned here, Whether by *theſe that are with him* we are to underſtand *Chriſtians*, formally ſo taken, in their Adherence to the Faith and Practice of Godlineſs; or, if we are to mean *Chriſtians* in a ſecular Capacity, exerciſing Force againſt Force, in a Military Way? I ſee not why they may not be underſtood in both Caſes: But, be their Capacity what it will, we are ſure their Diſpoſition and Tendency is all *Chriſtian*, which the Text caſts up to us in theſe Particulars; 1. *Called.* This ſome underſtand barely of an outward Call to ſome Piece of Work, which may fall to the Share of a graceleſs Perſon, as in the Caſe of *Jehu, Cyrus*, &c. But it ſeems hard to reſtrict the Senſe of a Word, where the Context does not require. I ſee nothing but that may be retained, and in Conjunction therewith alſo to extend it to *Effectual Calling*, by which they are brought out of a State of *Nature*, into a State of *Communion with God*: Nor do I think but it will be chiefly, if not only, ſuch whom God will honour to advance his Cauſe. 2. *Choſen.* This they would alſo carry off from the *Eternal Election*, and make it ſignify the ſame upon the Matter with *Called*: But this is to make a *Tautology* in the Compaſs a few Words, which is not a fair treating of the Word of God. The great Reaſon they give for this, is, That *Election* comes after *Vocation*, and ſo cannot be underſtood of *Eternal Election.* We need not be ſtartled with the Reaſonings of this Sort of Men, who are Enemies on all Occaſions to the Doctrine of *Eternal Election*, and uſe Shifts (pitiful enough) to ſtave off any Impreſſions thereof. As for the Reaſon they bring, That it is named after *Vocation*, this is very trival; for the Apoſtle *Peter* rangeth them in the ſame Order, 1 *Pet.* i. 10. *Give Diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure*: And yet ſome of theſe Authors own, that Eternal Election is by *Peter* meant, if there be any ſuch Thing in Scripture. But the Truth is, we are not always to fetch the natural Order of Things from the Method of enumerating them in Scripture: The Reaſon I conceive, why theſe Things are not always named according to the Order of their Nature, may be to ſhew the equal Verity and Neceſſity of them. And, as *Marckius* ſays, *It is as plain a Way to find out the Fountain by its Streams, as the Stream from its Fountain*; for effectual Calling is the Stream flowing from

Eternal Election. Beſides, it may be juſtly doubted whether theſe learned Perſons can give one Inſtance of a temporal Call to an Office or Exerciſe, expreſſed in Scripture under the Term *Election*; and ſo it would appear here neceſſarily to be meant of *Eternal Election*. 3. *Faithful*. Here they enervate the true Senſe of this alſo, and make it ſignify no more than what we mean by *Common Honeſty*, which may be found in the worſt of Men. That this alſo is in it, I yield readily; but I cannot be brought to believe this is all the Import thereof; but think it takes in (and in a ſpecial Manner) the Habit and Exerciſe of *Saving Faith*, that Grace whereby the Elect are united to Chriſt Jeſus, and is the Firſt-fruits of *Election* from all Eternity, and *Effectual Calling* in Time: And ſo we have a very ſhort, but comprehenſive, Account of theſe who fight under Chriſt's Banner; and it furniſheth us with irretragable Reaſons why theſe who fought againſt the *Lamb* could not prevail, but were miſerably routed.

We have had the Explication of the Beaſt in all the mentioned Parts; now follows the ſecond Part of the Angel's Expoſition of the Waters on which the Woman ſat, *v.* 1. or the People over which ſhe was to have Dominion: Where we have to notice, 1. The Interpretation of that Part of the Viſion, *Waters*, v. 15. 2. An Account how the Woman's Empire will be broken, in the other two.

15 And he ſaith unto me, The Waters which thou ſaweſt, where the Whore ſitteth, are Peoples, and Multitudes, and Nations, and Tongues.

We have often met with this *Emblem* before in this Prophecy, but ſtill without an Expoſition, as we have here; and therefore I referred to this Place. It is a true prophetick Stile, and uſed by the Old Teſtament Prophets, *Iſa.* viii. 7. *Now therefore the Lord bringeth upon them the Waters of the River, ſtrong and many; even the King of* Aſſyria, *and all his Glory: And he ſhall come up over all his Chanels, and go over all his Banks.* So that, beſides the Word of God by the Angel, we have Scripture-authority to ſupport it. But we view, 1. The Emblem. 2. Its Interpretation.

1. The Emblem, *Waters*: Of which two Things are ſaid by the *Angel* to *John*, *Which thou ſaweſt*; yet it is not ſaid when *John* had the Viſion, that he ſaw *many Waters*, and therefore it is queſtioned where he ſaw them, if not in this Viſion? Anſwer, The *Angel* promiſed, *v.* 5. *to ſhew him the Whore ſitting* (for ſo the Word may be turned) *upon*, or among *many Waters*; and tho' *John* does not make a Report of them, yet it is not to be doubted he ſaw them, ſeeing the *Angel* tells him of them again, as ſeen by him. Further, they are called the Waters *where the Whore ſitteth*, originally, *ſat*; which is better, becauſe probably the Type was removed before the Explication was begun; and therefore he ſpeaks in the *paſt Tenſe*, tho' the Accompliſhment was all to come. There is no conſiderable Difference of the Phraſe in this, from what we had, *v.* 1. for they agree in this, That the Waters were about the Whore, *i. e.* near her on all Sides: And more, That they continued ſo, *i. e.* ſhe perſiſted to have Power over them for a long Time, yet this was not to laſt always.

2. There is the Interpretation of this Emblem, or theſe Things meant by the *Waters*; *Peoples*, *Multitudes*, &c. We ſhewed this to be Scripture-ſtile, and ſeems to be the Intendment of that Paſſage, *Pſal.* xciii. 3, 4. *The Floods have lifted up, O Lord, the Floods have lifted up their Voice; the Floods have lifted up their Waves. The Lord on high is mightier than the Noiſe of many Waters, yea, than the mighty Waves of the Sea.* Nor does there want an Analogy for this Signification, ſeeing an Heap of Waters, whether in the Sea or Lakes, is always compoſed of a Number of Rivers, or Rivulets; ſo all great Kingdoms are compoſed of mixed Multitudes: Waters are ſtill roving and moving, as Multitudes are unconſtant: Nothing can be permanent that lives in the Waters; ſo theſe *Beaſts*, *Heads*, *Horns*, yea, and the *Whore* herſelf, tho' ſhe may continue a long Time, yet ſhall ſhe fail as Waters do. But it is enquired, Whether theſe four Words ſignify all the ſame Thing? Some affirm, others deny. I cannot think them *ſynonimous*. Tho' it will be no eaſy Task to diſcriminate them, yet we may eſſay it, eſpecially that we had them before, *Chap.* v. 9. and *Chap.* vii. 9.

(1.) *Peoples*. This I find uſed to expreſs thoſe who come of the ſame Stock or Kind, *Jonah* i. 8. *Of what People art thou?* And it is ſaid of *Eſther*, Chap. ii. 10. *She had not ſhewed her People.* It ſeems further to note a regular and orderly Number of Men; and thus we read often of *not being a People*, i. e. a confuſed Herd: So that to be a *People*, is to be morigerous and managed. For this Reaſon it was, that the *Romans* were proud of the Word *People*: *Populus Romanus* was, to them, equal to the *States-General* in *Holland*, or the *Parliament* of *Britain*.

(2.) *Mul-*

(2.) *Multitudes.* We meet with this Word frequently in the Scripture, and ſeems to denote a mixed *Multitude*, i. e. a great Number, of different Deſigns and Diſpoſitions. We had it once before, *Chap.* vii. 9. where it ſignifies an innumerable Number, for it contains ſome of all Nations. The *Criticks* in the *Greek* Language ſay, It ſignifies a tumultuary Multitude, or what we call a *Mob* or *Rabble*, tho' ſometimes it is taken in a ſofter Senſe; and therefore by this we are to mean a Collection out of different Nations, moving the ſame Way, but of different Deſigns.

(3.) *Nations.* This is more eaſy; for by its commoneſt Senſe, both in Scripture and ordinary Uſe, it ſignifies a Number of People of different Ranks, enjoying the ſame common Privileges, and ruled by the ſame Laws; 2 *Kings* xvii. 29. *Every Nation made gods of their own. Nation ſhall riſe up againſt Nation.*

(4.) *Tongues.* This is more uncertain than any of the reſt; for ſometimes one Nation will have ſeveral Tongues and ſometimes ſeveral Nations will have but one Tongue; and therefore the Learned take different Meaſures, ſome for the *firſt*, and others for the *ſecond* Senſe. It ſeems not worth the while to ſpend Time in a Reſearch; only, however we take it, it ſhews plainly the Votaries of *Antichriſt* were to be a great Number of People, which, however unlike in other Things, were harmoniouſly to agree for a Time to greaten the Beaſt, and wage War with the *Lamb.*

But what is moſt comfortable in all this Relation, is the Prophecy of her Fall, which the Angel reſerved to this Time, that all her Greatneſs was delineate; and now he gives an Account of the Whore's Ruin in the next two Verſes, the one repreſents the Steps taken, and the other the Ground.

16 And the ten Horns which thou ſaweſt upon the Beaſt, theſe ſhall hate the Whore, and ſhall make her deſolate and naked, and ſhall eat her Fleſh, and burn her with Fire.

There are ſome Difficulties moved about theſe Agents, *The ten Horns.* Some think they are the *Ten* before mentioned: The Reaſon they give has no Want of Probability, becauſe theſe *Horns* are ſaid to *bewail her*, Chap. xviii. 9. This has ſo ſtraitned ſome Expoſitors, that they think only ſome of theſe Ten will concur to bring her down, and not the whole: But I think we ſhould not thus croſs the Text; And if *Ten* be a definite Number, *v.* 12. it muſt certainly be ſo alſo here. Others imagine theſe *Ten* to be diverſe from the other *Ten*; and, to fortify this, they appeal to another Reading, *The ten Horns which thou ſaweſt, and the Beaſt, theſe ſhall hate the Whore:* And ſo they make the *Beaſt* and the *Horns* concur to bring down the *Whore.* This ſeems to run ſmoothly, but it does not remove the Difficulty: For if theſe *ten Horns* be diverſe from the other *Ten*, which they are obliged to affirm, for the Reaſon before given; Then the Queſtion is, Why may not the *Beaſt* be *another*, and different from the *Beaſt* upon which the *Whore ſitteth?* v. 3. And where will they find either this Beaſt or theſe Horns? Beſides, it is expreſly ſaid, that the ten Horns are theſe *ten Horns he had ſeen*: Nor have we mention made of any other *Ten* than theſe that gave their Power to the Beaſt, *v.* 13. And further, they are the very ſame *Ten*, as is plain from *v.* 17. where it is ſaid, They were to *give their Kingdoms to the Beaſt, until the Words of God ſhould be fulfilled.* Nor indeed is it poſſible to read and compare *v.* 13. & 17. together, and not believe they ſpeak of the ſame *Horns* or *Kings*; and therefore we are firmly to believe them to be the ſame in *v.* 16. as in *v.* 12. Finally, it is a bold Stroke to invert the Reading of the Text, to ſerve a contrived Scheme they would adduce the Words to countenance.

They further enquire, Is not the *Beaſt* different from the *Whore*? Anſwer, They are the ſame, and have different Names upon different Accounts. 'Tis called a *Beaſt*, becauſe it has the Room of the *ſeven Heads*, and every whit as great a Power as ever any of them had; and therefore it is called the *eighth*, v. 11. It is called the *Whore*, in Oppoſition to the *Church*, who is called *the Bride, the Lamb's Wife.* So that, as to its *Civil Government*, it is called a *Beaſt*; and as to its *falſe Religion*, a *Whore.* And ſo, when we read of the Deſtruction thereof, *Chap.* xix. 20. we read nothing of the Woman, or the Whore, but only of the *Beaſt*, and the *falſe Prophet.*

Yet, after all, the Difficulty remains, which ſays plainly, *Chap.* xviii. 9. *The Kings of the Earth who committed Fornication with her, ſhall bewail her.* Now, it is not ſuppoſable, theſe would concur to the Deſtruction of one they loved ſo tenderly: And 'tis plainly inſinuate, they had no Hand in it; for all the Part they are ſaid to have, is a violent Grief when this Deſtruction comes; for it is only ſaid, *They ſhall ſee her burning*

wing afar off. And therefore they could not kindle the Flame; but they lamented, that it was neither in their Power to prevent or extinguiſh it.

I yield, the Difficulty is great; yet, tho' I could offer no Anſwer thereto, I would not recede from this plain Reading of the Words: But indeed I do not think it inſuperable, becauſe, 1. 'Tis nowhere ſaid, That only ten Kings did commit Fornication with her; yea, it were no hard Matter to double that Number: And ſo we may underſtand theſe wailing Kings of ſome others than theſe Ten that will deſtroy her. 2. It is not ſaid, *Chap.* xviii. 9. that theſe Kings who bewailed her, are the very ſame that gave their Kingdom to her at firſt, and afterward united to her Deſtruction; and ſo I think we are left at Liberty to underſtand them of other *Kings* than theſe above-mentioned: Thus I think the Difficulty evaniſheth. Hence we ſee there will be a *Schiſm* in the Kingdom of the *Beaſt*; upon which the far greater Part will riſe up againſt it, and join their Forces to the Deſtruction of the *Whore*: The Reaſon that may induce them to this ſeems to be, They had fought long and bitterly againſt the *Lamb*, but without Succeſs, yea, with great Damage to themſelves; which will open their Eyes, and inflame their Indignation againſt the *Whore*, whom, out of Revenge, they will oppoſe and overcome by theſe Steps after-mentioned.

1. *They ſhall hate the Whore.* It is moſt ordinary in this Piece of Wickedneſs, after the gratifying of Luſt, to hate thoſe that before were the Object of Deſire; and, the more unnatural and unlawful the Luſt be, the greater grows the Hatred; as in the Caſe of *Amnon* and his Siſter *Tamar*, 2 Sam. xiii. 15. *The Hatred wherewith he hated her, was greater than the Love wherewith he loved her.* There ſeems to concur theſe Cauſes to excite this Hatred, 1. The great Loſs theſe *Kings* had ſuſtained while they made War with the *Lamb*; for, tho' they were not quite overthrown, they were overcome and defeat: And nothing is more ready to raiſe in our Minds an Averſion to any Body, than the Conſideration of ſome notable Loſs we have met with in their Quarrel, eſpecially if it be a Matter we might in Prudence and without Neceſſity have ſhifted, as in this Caſe plainly caſts up; For it was Arbitrary to them to imbarque or not in the Intereſt of the *Whore.* 2. The prevailing Light of the *Goſpel*, againſt which their Eyes had been ſhut before, will irreſiſtably bring them over to *Chriſt Jeſus*; this will ſo imploy the Head, and manage the Affections, that no Room will be left for ſtrange Lovers: As we ſee in the Caſe of thoſe that uſed curious Arts; as ſoon as the Goſpel overcame them, it is ſaid, *Acts* xix. 19. *They brought their Books together, and burnt them before all Men.* 3. Their Reflections on the bewitching *Sorceries* this Whore had uſed towards them, will aggravate their Averſion. All Men naturally hate to be impoſed on; and, no ſooner is the Cheat diſcovered, but the Impoſture is utterly deteſted.

2. *They ſhall make her deſolate and naked.* Some think, no more is to be underſtood here, but that theſe *Kings* will withdraw their wonted Favours, by which the *Whore* was enriched; this they take alſo to be the Meaning of drying up the Waters that ſurrounded her, when the People, whom ſhe led hood-wink'd, ſhall have their Eyes open, and ſhall forſake her. Yet I think more is to be meant, as, 1. A downright Plundering her of all her former Acquiſitions, and a Bereaving her of her ill-purchaſed Gain; as we ſee was exemplified at the Reformation, when the Kings of *Britain*, &c. not only withheld from the *Pope* what they uſed annually to pay in to this Coffers, but alſo retook by Force, what by *Guile* and *Prieſt-craft* had been filched from theſe ſeveral Kingdoms, for the Maintenance of their idle and dangerous *Convents, Abbacies, Nunneries*, &c. by which the *Pope* got an immenſe Treaſure, and great Quantities of the beſt Lands in their Dominions, which had been imployed for Fewel to the Luxury of theſe Drones. 2. A diſcovering of her Nakedneſs, by expoſing to the World her belliſh Politicks, whereby ſhe had bewitched them. This is uſual with all Paramours, who are brought to a Sight and Senſe of their Pollution; they open up to the World theſe Artifices whereby the Whores had debauched them. 3. It ſeems to point out theſe Methods uſed by the faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel to manifeſt to the World the falſe and blaſphemous Principles of this *Whore*: A doing this from the Word of God, to the Conviction of the Throng of Onlookers, will notably *diſcover her Nakedneſs.*

3. *They ſhall eat her Fleſh.* This is a prophetick Expreſſion, a-kin to that of *Daniel*, Chap. vii. 5. *A ſecond Beaſt like a Bear, with three Ribs in its Mouth, — And they ſaid unto it, Ariſe and devour much Fleſh.* This is commonly underſtood of the *Medes* and *Perſians*, their Slaughters and Depredations committed upon all about them; which is explain'd by *Iſaiah*, Chap. xiii. 17, 18. *I will ſtir up the* Medes *againſt them, which ſhall not regard Silver; and as for Gold, they ſhall not delight in it: Their Bows alſo ſhall daſh the young Men to Pieces; they ſhall have no Pity upon the Fruit of the Womb, neither ſhall they ſpare Children.* So that this Phraſe does not point out theſe

these *Kings* to be *Canibals*, who eat the Flesh of their Enemies; this is not to be supposed of any who have known never so little of the Rules of *Christianity*. But it imports, 1. Their Rage and Fury against the Whore; they will be implacable, and follow their Business very close, to destroy wherever they come: And so *Eat* may well bear, seeing it is several Times taken for *Consuming*. 2. That they will convert the Substance of the Whore to their own proper Use, which Substance was to her as her Flesh, and made her look well; but then it will be imployed to other Purposes, as we see in reformed Kingdoms.

4. *They shall burn her with Fire.* This must be understood of the Residue after she was made desolate and naked; then that which remained, was to be burnt, as useless to these *Kings*. This seems to denote, they will consume all that gave her the Denomition of a *whorish Woman*, i. e. all the Modes of the false Worship, these *Rulers*, *Laws*, *Canons*, *Constitutions*, &c. together will all the Instruments of their Idolatry, as *Images*, *Altars*, *Vestments*, *Relicks*, *Shrines*, *and other Trumperies* she holds to be holy.

It may justly be wondered, all Things considered, why these Kings were so long a-setting about this Work: The Reason of this we have in what follows,

17 For God hath put in their Hearts to fulfil his Will, and to agree, and give their Kingdom unto the Beast, until the Words of God shall be fulfilled.

Where we have, 1. The moving Cause. 2. The Effect. 3. The Time limited.

1. The Cause, *God hath put in their Hearts*, i. e. by his his sovereign and overruling Providence; yea, and in some of them at least, by his Grace, hath ordered and determined these *Kings* to this Work: For *the Hearts of Kings are in the Lord's Hand, and he turns them whithersoever he pleaseth, as the Rivers of Water.* The Lord never had any Work to do, but he found fit Instruments; yea, he can make fit who were before both unmeet and unwilling, as we see in the Case of *Saul*, Acts ix. Here they were not left to the Exercise of their Free-will, tho' they do it willingly; for he alters the Biass of their Hearts, so that now they will run as cheerfully to the Destruction of this *Whore*, as before they were hearty in supporting her.

2. The Effect, *To fulfil his Will*, viz. that *Will* we have, *v.* 16. Nor is it possible to take it in any other Sense, seeing it is so closly connected therewith by the Illative *for*. Further it assures us, when *God* shall set these *Kings* at Work, they do will not do their Business by Halves, but will go through with the same clean-stitch. Some make no mention of this; if it be not an Escape, it will be worse.

3. The Time limited, which respects the Duration of *Babylon*, and the Time of her Fall, *To agree, and give their Kingdom unto the Beast, until the Word of God be fulfilled.* The Sense of these Words is not obscure, from what we had on *v.* 13. They shall agree in Judgment, or be of one Mind, and give their Power unto the *Beast* for a limited Time; and as soon as that is over, then they will fulfil the Will of God: Which is indeed all that can in sober Reason be made from it. Yet I find no Passage of this Prophecy more perplexed by the Wranglings of Expositors than this, where they would have these two mentioned here, *viz. to agree*, and *to give their Kingdom to the Beast*, to be equally Effects of the great Cause mentioned in the Beginning of the Verse, *viz. God hath put into their Hearts*, as the proper and immediate Effect there condescended on, *viz. to fulfil his Will*, i. e. the Sentence of God against the Beast: And so the Sense be, *God put it into their Hearts---- to agree* [originally, to be of one Judgment] *and to give their Kingdoms to the Beast.* This indeed makes a very great Difficulty; because, should that Verb, God *put* in their Heart, rule those two Infinitives as much as the first, it would make God to have an equal Hand in the *Rise* and Prosperity of *Antichrist*, as in his Judgment and Ruin; which cannot be thought without injuring the *Holiness* of God, which on no Account must be admitted.

To escape this, I find the Learned driven to very poor Shifts. Some fall foul of the Text, and allow an Error in the most Part of Copies; Some press an Exposition upon the Words they cannot bear; Others tell us, All the Meaning of it is plainly this, that God effected the first, and permitted the other two: But how can this hold, if we allow the Verb *put* to rule all the three *Infinitives*? For all is Efficacy, and no Word of either *Prophecy* or *Permission*, which may well take Place, *v.* 13. Therefore, that I may clear this a little, I offer a few Considerations at once to remove the pinching Difficulty, and give the Sense of the Words;

(1.) We have a great many Passages of Scripture, which entertain us with Expressions as hard in Appearance as this: As, God is said *to harden* Pharaoh's *Heart*; to *give up*

to a reprobate Senſe; that *he ſends out lying Spirits into the Mouths of falſe Prophets*: And in particular, that *he will ſend Antichriſt ſtrong Deluſion*. But none in their Wits ever underſtood theſe or ſuch like Expreſſions in that Senſe, as if God was as active in them, as he is in the Works of Grace and Juſtice; or that he did approve theſe malignant Diſpoſitions in the Children of Men, far leſs that he has an effective Hand therein. In theſe the Learned are very ready to find Methods to vindicate the Holineſs of God, which might be as ſuitable here, and in a great Meaſure remove the Difficulty: As, That God did not infuſe any actual Hardneſs into *Pharaoh*'s Heart, but did withdraw his overruling and powerful Determination to what is Good, and ſo left him to his own Meaſures and *Satan*'s Influence; That God is no otherwiſe the Cauſe of theſe Evils, than the *Sun* is of *Darkneſs*, i. e. by leaving the Hemiſphere: So that here is no poſitive Efficacy at all.

(2.) If it be urged, That here firſt the common Cauſe, *he hath put*, is advanced, and then three Effects, without any Alteration of the Conſtruction; and conſequently the Efficacy ſeems to be the ſame in them all. I anſwer, We may eaſily ſatisfy ourſelves as to this, if we allow the two laſt (which they call Effects) to bear Relation to, and correſpond with the Accompliſhment of the Word of God, *i. e.* the Word of Prophecy, as we have ſhortly, Verſes 12 and 13. of this Chapter, and at more Length in the whole of Chapters xii. and xiii. And thus we ſee the Sentence of God againſt *Antichriſt*; for his Deſtruction ſhall take Place as ſoon as the Prophecy of his Reign and Continuance is fulfilled. This ſeems to be a very eaſy and natural Senſe of the Words, and delivers from a great many Thorny Niceties.

(3.) But they urge the Letter of the Text, That they are two *Infinitives*, and claim the Government of the Verb, *he hath put*, in the Beginning of the Verſe. I anſwer, This may be eaſily ſolved, by placing a *Point* after the firſt Clauſe of the Verſe, *He hath put into their Hearts to fulfil his Will.* And then to render the reſt of the Verſe abſolutely thus, *They having agreed, and given their Kingdom to the Beaſt, until the Word of God be fulfilled.* Such a Way of rendring Infinitives is very agreeable to the Nature of the *Greek*, and the rather here that both of the *Infinitives* are *Acriſts*.

From the whole of this, we have the certain and ſudden Deſtruction of the Whore fixed, 1. To the Inſtruments, theſe Kings that contributed their Counſels and Arms to promote her Greatneſs. 2. To the Time when, at the expiring of the Forty two Months; during which Time, at leaſt as to the greateſt Part thereof, theſe Kings were to be ſubject to her; but that Time being over, they will turn their Hearts and Hands againſt her to her utter Extirpation.

18 And the Woman which thou ſaweſt, is that great City, which reigneth over the Kings of the Earth.

This is the third Branch of the *Angel's* Interpretation, and reſpects the *Woman* whom he heard of, *v.* 1. under the Character of *the great Whore*, and ſaw ſitting upon the *Beaſt*, v. 3. *gorgeouſly apparelled*, v. 4. That it is the ſame *Woman*, is plain from the Clauſe added, *which thou ſaweſt*; for we read but of one *Woman* in the Viſion, and this is her, whoſe Signification we are next to enquire after.

In the Signification of this Woman, we have, 1. The Thing in general; and then the diſtinguiſhing Quality thereof.

1. The Signification in general, *that City*; which to be ſure is no other but what was called *Babylon* before, as it is afterwards. I find the Throng of Expoſitors incline to take *City* here literally: But, as I prov'd before, that *Babylon* cannot be taken *literally*, nor for any particular City; All which Reaſons effectually prove alſo, that *City* is not to be taken literally either: But that as *Antichriſt* is called a *Whore*, in Oppoſition to the *true Church*; and a *Woman*, becauſe of ſome Analogy betwixt the *true Church* and *her*; So *Antichriſt* is called *Babylon*, in Oppoſition to the Church called *Jeruſalem*, and the *holy City*; and a *City*, becauſe of ſome Analogy betwixt him and the Faithful. The Church often comes under the Deſignation of a *City*, Rev. xxi. 2. *I* John *ſaw the holy City, the new Jeruſalem*; Which to be ſure is meant either of the Church *militant* or *triumphant*: And in this ſame Dialect, the Apoſtle deſigns all Believers, *Fellow-Citizens with the Saints*, Eph. ii. 19. And the whole Church is called, *the City of the living God*, Heb. xii. 22. Now here, in Oppoſition to that City, *Antichriſt* is named a *City*. There are theſe Things wherein the *true Church* agrees with the *falſe Church*, and give Ground why both of them ſhould be called *Cities*. As, 1. Cities are incloſed with Walls and Fences; and both the Fold of Chriſt, and Synagogue of Satan have their proper Walls of Separation. 2. Cities have Gates and Bars, by which they are ſecured, and through which there is Acceſs to them: The *Church* has

Chriſt

Chriſt as the Gate, and his Diſcipline for the Fence thereof. *Antichriſt* hath his Terms of Communion, and Method to ſecure themſelves. 3. Cities have Guards for their Defence: God is a Wall of Fire about his Church; *The Angel of the Lord encamps round about them that fear him.* *Antichriſt* wants not his *Guards*, tho' they be of the black Sort: He is fortified on all Quarters by Satan and his Seed. 4. Cities have ſpecial Privileges indulg'd the proper Deniſons thereof: The Immunities of the Saints are wonderfully great, and ſuch as a Stranger intermeddles not with. There are alſo many Enfranchiſements fall to the Share of the Inhabiters of *Babylon*, ſuch as they refuſe to all who want the *Mark of the Beaſt*; this is repreſented by Buying and Selling. 5. Cities have their Laws according to the *Setts* of each of them, which are obligatory of all the Inhabitants: This holds in both. 6. Cities have their particular Orders of Dignitaries, as *Magiſtrates, Councellors*, &c. It is ſo with the *Church* whereof *Chriſt* is Head, and under him are appointed Teachers, Rulers, Helps for ordering the Affairs of this City. *Antichriſt* has alſo his Sett of Rulers, according to the ſeveral Pieces of this *Babel*.

2. The diſtinguiſhing Character of this City, *Great*; *That great City*. We had this before, *Chap.* xiv. 8. where I prov'd it could not be underſtood of the City *Rome*; which alſo will be clear from the following Illuſtration of this Greatneſs, *which reigneth over the Kings of the Earth*; or rather, *which hath Dominion* over, *&c.* This cannot reſpect the Condition of any one *City* in the World in the Apoſtle's Time; for *Antichriſt* was not to have the Character of a *City*, or of *Babylon*; till he had grown great, and wreathed his Yoke about the Necks of the *Kings* of the Earth; for, till that Time, he did not deſerve the Character given of this *Woman* in the Viſion, *v.* 4. of this *Chapter*. We are then to underſtand all by this *City* here, I proved before to be comprehended in *Babylon*, which is indeed very great, whether conſidered in itſelf, or comparatively with the *true Church*, which is but ſmall in Compariſon thereof.

CHAP. XVIII.

IN the preceeding Chapter, we had at large the aggravated Guilt of *Babylon myſtical*; together with a ſhort Hint at her Plagues, *v.* 16, 17. In this and the following, we have a more full Prophecy of her Downfal by the Effects of the *ſeven Vials* mentioned, *Chap.* xvi. And, if I am not miſtaken, we have the *ſeven Vials* in Order enlarged on, tho' it muſt be owned for ordinary in Terms as obſcure as the ſhort Account of the *Vials* themſelves; which needs not ſurpriſe, ſeeing we found the ſame in the Illuſtration of the *Seals*: And in both they agree, that tho' the Explication be as much conceal'd from the Eye of the World as the Emblem was; yet the Terms uſed in the Enlargement, are no other than what the Old Teſtament Prophets were in uſe to ſpeak in.

I am not to divide this Chapter into ſeveral Parts, according to the Speeches of ſo many Angels, as ſome do; for they are not all called Angels: Nor yet by Emblems; for we have ſeveral Voices without any Type. After I have conſidered theſe two Chapters, the moſt natural Method I can find in them is, that (as was ſaid) we have the Amplification of the *ſeven Vials*, whereof the firſt five are found in this Chapter, and the other two in the next. I hope this general Diſtribution will offend none; becauſe, tho' few dream the *Eighteenth Chapter* has any Concern with the Vials, yet the Throng of the moſt learned Expoſitors own the Nineteenth Chapter to be an Enlargement upon the *ſixth* and *ſeventh* Vials, which I think gives a plauſible Handle to ſuppoſe this muſt deſcant upon the other *five*: Nor do I ſee any Reaſon to perſwade why the laſt two ſhould have the Regard of an Explication, and the reſt be neglected, ſeeing they contain notable Steps of *God's Juſtice* againſt his Enemies, and *Mercy* to his Church, as well as the two laſt. If there ſhould be a Miſtake in ranging the firſt five, others of more Penetration and Leiſure may correct it, eſpecially that here I am to walk in an untroden Path.

This Chapter then I conceive to contain the Amplification of the five firſt Vials, in this Order: The *1ſt* Vial is enlarged on, to *v.* 4. The *2d*, to *v.* 6. The *3d*, to *v.* 9. The *4th*, to *v.* 21. The *5th*, to the Cloſe.

I would only offer this Premonition, That in the Inveſtigation of theſe Vials, we find what was moſt fully repreſented in the Emblem, is more lightly touched at in the Enlargement; and what was more ſhortly in the former Viſion, is at more Length inſiſted on in the *Amplification*: So that betwixt them we may meet with what ſhould ſatisfy

every serious Person. As for the Curious and Captious, I make no Account of such; for this Prophecy is not design'd for them, as we heard before.

Amplification of VIAL I.

WE had the Emblem of this Vial, *Chap.* xvi. 2. which was poured out upon the Earth, and produced a grievous Sore upon the Votaries of the Beast. Here we have the Enlargement of the same, in the first three Verses of the Chapter: Where we are to notice, 1. The Description of the Angel, *v.* 1. And, 2. His Message, in the other two.

1 AND after these Things, I saw another Angel come down from Heaven, having great Power, and the Earth was lightned with his Glory.

We are not to doubt but our *Apostle* was still in the *Wilderness*, where he had the *Vision* of the *Woman* and the *Beast*; because it is said here, *After these Things*, *i. e.* immediately after the Vision and Explication thereof. This also concludes, what now he *sees* and *hears* has a very near Relation to what he had been honoured to be acquainted with before: He reports several Things about this Angel, as, 1. His Distinction from the former that carried him to the Wilderness. 2. Whence he came. 3. His Power. 4. His Glory.

1. This is called *Another Angel*: Several Copies want the Word *Another*, but the Matter is the same, whether it be added or not; For it is certainly understood he was different from the Angel that talked with him in the former Chapter, in these Things, 1. He came immediately from Heaven, which is not said of the other Angel, for he must come from the Earth upon which he poured his Vial: And, had he mounted Heaven after the former Conference, it would consume some Time before he returned; but here, immediately upon the Back of that Vision, he saw this Angel: And therefore, it is supposable, that Angel left him after he ended his Explication, and was succeeded by this. 2. He is distinguished from the other in his Power and Glory. It is therefore questioned, *Who this Angel is? whether created or uncreated?* Some plead, he is *uncreated*, because of these Properties given him. It must be owned they are notable, yet not such as oblige us necessarily to believe him to be *our Lord Jesus Christ*; nor is his Work other than might be managed by a created Angel: And that we have the Angel of the Covenant making another Sort of Appearance in the next Chapter, we may allow this to be a created Angel. But then, the Question is, *Whom he represents?* I own, I am much inclined to go in with their Opinion, who make him to signify the Ministry God will raise up in his Church at that Time: We will find more Freedom to go in with this, when we have considered the rest of this Purpose.

2. Whence he came, *From Heaven*; to shew the Original of such a *Ministry*, and may be taken in the same Sense with that of our Lord, *Mat.* xxi. 25. *The Baptism of* John, *whence was it? from Heaven, or of Men?* So that, God, at that Time, will raise up an able Ministry: Not as if any should be extraordinarily called; for, tho' God may do that, we are not to expect it. This is added, to shew the Sufficiency of this Ministry, that it is of God. Or, if by Heaven we understand the Church of God, then the Sense of it is, God, in his holy Providence, will train up in the Church, where is the *Nursery* of Ministers, a Sett of eminent Men, whom he will signally bless with Courage, and other Qualifications, and send them to denounce his Judgments against *Antichrist*, to make that *Whore* altogether inexcusable.

3. The Power of this Angel, *Having great Power*, or rather *great Authority*; which may refer not only to the Ministerial *Qualifications*, but also to the Ministerial *Exercise* thereof, which God will in a very special Manner countenance. This shews, whatever be the Power of *Antichrist*, there will still be an antagonistick Power, that will not dare to proclaim God's Judgments against him.

4. The Glory of this Angel, *The Earth was lightned with his Glory.* We have the like Expression applied to the gracious and efficacious Presence of God in his Sanctuary, *Ezek.* xliii. 2. *Behold, the Glory of the God of* Israel *came from the Way of the East, and his Voice was as a Noise of many Waters, and the Earth shined with his Glory.* Nor do I see what should hinder to take it in the same Sense here; for the Apostle has an Expression to the same Purpose, 2 *Cor.* iii. 8. *The Ministration of the Spirit shall be glo-*

glorious. The *Goſpel* is called *Light*, and ſuch as want it, are ſaid *to ſit in Darkneſs*; ſo that, when the Goſpel ſhall be ſent forth with ſo much Power, the Earth will be inlightned therewith, and that Part of the Earth (undreſtand *Aſia* according to the firſt Vial) may be ſaid to be inlightned, tho' not converted, becauſe their Filthineſs will be openly diſcovered to their Shame.

Next, we have the Meſſage; where, 1. The Denunciation. 2. Its Grounds.

2 And he cried mightily with a ſtrong Voice, ſaying, Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the Habitation of Devils, and the Hold of every foul Spirit, and a Cage of every unclean and hateful Bird.

This Denunciation is very terrible, as appears from the Way and Manner the Angel uttered it; *He cried with a mighty and ſtrong Voice*; or nearer, *He cried in Strength with a ſtrong Voice.* On *v.* 1. we had his *Authority*, here his *Strength*: There may be an authoritative Voice, where there is not great Strength; but when the Cryer is *ſtrong*, and exerts all his Ability in Utterance, it will then be a great or loud *Voice.* I cannot think that *Babylon* is to fall by this Voice, as ſome contend; tho' I ſhall eaſily grant, that the Voice of the powerful Preaching of the Goſpel will, by the Bleſſing of God, be effectual to weaken her. 'Tis true, God, by the Sound of *Rams Horns*, brought down the Walls of *Jericho*, Joſh. vi. 1, *&c.* Nor ſhall I refuſe there is ſomething in this Example of Juſtice intended for our Inſtruction, and which may be fully verified in the Fall of *Myſtical Babylon*: But that no other Methods will be uſed to raze that great *City*, what we heard from the former Chapter, will not ſuffer us to believe. That which I take chiefly to be the Import of the Words, is to point out to us the Zeal of that Miniſtry; they will not fear the Faces of Men, for God will ſtrengthen and ſupport them; tho' *Antichriſt* may fight againſt them, he ſhall not prevail. But the Matter of this Denunciation is what we are moſt concerned with; where is, 1. The Prediction of her Downfall. 2. Her After-ſtate.

I. A Prediction of the Deſtruction of the Man of Sin, *Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen.* There is nothing more ordinary among the Prophets, than to repreſent in the *Preterite*, what is only to come to paſs: That this is only a Prophecy, *v.* 21. will ſufficiently clear, where 'tis ſaid, *Thus ſhall that great City* Babylon *be thrown down.* As for the Explication of the Words, we had it at Length on *Chap.* xiv. 8.

Some take Occaſion from both Parts of this Text, to confirm themſelves in that Opinion before touched at, *Chap.* xiv. 8. That by this Fall we are to underſtand the *Apoſtaſy*, and not the *Deſtruction* of *Antichriſt*; and ſay, All theſe Expreſſions point out her State of *Defection*; and ſtrain their Wits for the Parallel. For Anſwer, It would be remembred, the Prophet, in foretelling the Deſtruction of *Myſtical Babylon*, alludes to what was propheſied concerning literal *Babylon*: This ſeems plain here, as a Paſſage from the old Prophets confirms, *Iſa.* xiii. 19, &c. *Babylon, the Glory of Kingdoms, the Beauty of the* Chaldees *Excellency, ſhall be as when God overthrew* Sodom *and* Gomorrah; *it ſhall never be inhabited, neither ſhall it be dwelt in from Generation to Generation*; ----- *but wild Beaſts of the Deſert ſhall ly there: Their Houſes ſhall be full of doleful Creatures, and Owls ſhall dwell there, and Satyrs ſhall dance there; the wild Beaſts of the Iſlands ſhall cry in the deſolate Houſes, and Dragons in her pleaſant Places.* Where, 'tis plain, the State of *Babylon*'s After-Deſtruction is declared to us, and not her Defection. The like Expreſſions we have in other Places *Iſa.* xxxiv. 13, &c. *Jer.* li. 37, &c. The plain Meaning of all theſe is to tell us, all Antichriſt's Glory will evaniſh, and every Thing that is fearful and aſtoniſhing ſhall ſucceed in the Room thereof.

It is further objected, Theſe Expreſſions were literally fulfilled in literal *Babylon*: But what Accompliſhment can we imagine here, eſpecially that we take not *Babylon* for a *City* in the propereſt Senſe, but only for the three *idolatrous Powers* of the World? For, tho' Idolatry and Deluſion be exploded, and the Kingdoms devoted thereto may be deſtroyed, yet here we cannot find a Place for the *Devils*, and theſe *unclean Birds*; for it would be hard to ſay theſe Places of the Earth, they now inhabite, will be made all deſolate, eſpecially if we conſider they are poſſeſt of the moſt pleaſant and fertile Parts of it. But, if by *Babylon* we underſtand the City of *Rome*, as the Generality of Expoſitors do, then this penal *Miſery* may be eaſily applied thereto; whereas otherwiſe it ſeems very difficult.

I anſwer, However great this Pinch may appear, I preſume it is not inſuperable: Which I offer to evict by theſe few Conſiderations;

1. There is only an Alluſion made to the miſerable State of *literal* Babylon, and therefore we are to underſtand it *myſtically* of that Miſery *ſpiritual* Babylon will be brought to, after ſhe is demoliſhed; and, by a neceſſary Conſequence, this muſt be, in a great Meaſure, a ſpiritual Miſery repreſented by outward and temporal Adverſities: And thus, by reflecting upon the proſperous State of *Antichriſt*, the Reverſe of that will be found to be his Condition after his Fall. To hint but at a few Things, Inſtead of Riches, ſtark Poverty; inſtead of Beauty, Deformity; inſtead of an extended Dominion over the far greater Part of the World, the Yoke will be broke, and the Conſtitutions will fall aſunder like Ropes of Sand, and his pretended Authority be deſpiſed; whereas formerly their Forces were able to ſubdue others, then they will have nothing to defend themſelves.

2. When *Antichriſt* falls, and a very great Fall it will be, yet all that conſtitutes *Popery*, *Mhaometaniſm*, and *Hethaniſm*, will not be utterly extirpated and aboliſhed; there will be ſome remaining Seeds to brood again, but with ſmall Advances, till the One thouſand Years be expired, when we find *Satan* will be looſed again, *Chap.* xx. 7. and then they will grow as faſt as ever, tho' they are not to continue long: And it is more than probable, they will appear in another Shape than what they had before the One thouſand Years begun; but ſtill they will wind upon the old Bottom of that implacable Enmity betwixt the Seed of the Woman and Serpent.

3. The Miſery of ſpiritual *Babylon* will not be only and altogether upon the eſſential Parts that conſtitute her the *great Whore*, but there will alſo heavy Strokes reach the *Places* that Man of Sin nefted in, as is ordinary with God; for he gave Command to cut down the idolatrous Groves, to break the Altars, *&c.* So I doubt not but the Vengeance of Heaven will alſo reach theſe great Cities which are now the Pride of *Antichriſt*, as *Rome*, *Conſtantinople*, and other Cities in the World, famous for Idolatry; ſuch is his Averſion to theſe Sins, that the very Places and Tools imployed about them, tho' they be incapable of Sin, will feel the heavy Wrath of God. But this will appear better, when we view in the next Place,

4. The Antichriſtian *Principles*, and the Promoters of them, will be ſo hated and expoſed in the World, through the notable *Increaſe* of the Church, that they will be as much abhor'd as *Devils*, becauſe they lead to eternal Damnation: This will oblige the remaining Part to ſculk, as do theſe wild Creatures mentioned in the Text.

II. There is the Account of her After-ſtate, which will weaken the former Objection, and carry us off from a literal Senſe, or that fond Thought of ſome, It is to be meant of the *Defection* of *Antichriſt*. This State we have in theſe following Expreſſions;

1. It *is become the Habitation of Devils*. *Babylon* was ſo really in her moſt proſperous State, but then *Devils* dwelt among them as *gods* whom they worſhipped; for *whatever is offered unto Idols, is offered to Devils*. But then *Devils* will take up their Abode amongſt them as *Tormentors*; For, being chained by the Power of God, and incapable of working Miſchief to the Church, they will wreck all their Spite upon theſe they had formerly deluded; for neither will *Devils*, or theſe *Brats* of *Antichriſt*, have any Thing left but pure Malice; ſo that their Condition in Time, will be little more comfortable, than when they go to the Pit.

2. *The Hold* (orginally the Priſon) *of every foul* (originally unclean) *Spirit*. While *Spirit* is here taken in Diſtinction from Devils, it may ſignify the *Spirit* or *Temper* of wicked Men, eſpecially that they are deſigned *Unclean*; and ſo the Meaning is, All theſe poſſeſſed with an *Antichriſtian Spirit*, will ſeparate themſelves from the *Bride the Lamb's Wife*, whoſe Society they will hate; theſe Birds of a Feather will flock together. Hypocrites now live within the Pale of the Church, but then there will be no Room for them; the good Seed will grow together, and ſo will the Tares. It will not be want of Will to incommode the Church, but want of Power. This Reſtraint will be a moſt unpleaſant Confinement.

3. *A Cage* [Priſon] *of every unclean and hateful Bird*. The Deſignations given to theſe thus impriſoned, are *unclean and hateful Birds*, which is with Alluſion to the Diſtinction of *Fowls* under the *Law*, whereof ſome were *clean*, and might either be offered in Sacrifice to God, or eaten by the *Iſraelites*, Lev. xi. 13, *&c.* Others again were *unclean*, and might not be uſed any of theſe Ways. Now, tho' this Diſtinction be taken away, yet here there is an Alluſion thereto; and by this is meant wicked Men of a covetous and rapacious Diſpoſition, all morally unclean. That here theſe are ſaid to be *caged* or impriſoned, is to ſhew by what Power they are reſtrained from following their wonted Courſes; not that they are any more innocent, or better natured, but like a Hawk, when pent up, tho' ſhe ſee never ſo many Preys, can reach none of them. At that Time it will be ſo with the Wicked; when the Kingdom of Chriſt will be

ſhining

ſhining in its meridian Brightneſs, they will not have more Grace than before, but have no Power to hurt, which will be no ſmall Mortification to them.

3 For all Nations have drunk of the Wine of the Wrath of her Fornication, and the Kings of the Earth have committed Fornication with her, and the Merchants of the Earth are waxed rich through the Abundance of her Delicacies.

The Grounds or Reaſons why the Angel made ſuch a heavy Denunciation, ſeem to be taken rather from the *Effects* than the *Cauſe*, and plead more for a Threatning againſt the *Perſons* mentioned in the Text, than againſt *Babylon*, which I find ſome inſiſt on. In general, I only offer theſe Things to vindicate the Text; 1. By the Greatneſs of the *Effect*, eſpecially when it is univerſal, at leaſt very general, we may gather the *Efficacy* of the *Cauſe*; and it being *Evil*, the greater Harm it does, the more culpable is the *Cauſe*, which is the Caſe here: As if we would aggravate the Sin of a Murderer, it cannot be done to better Purpoſe, than tell how many Men he had killed; The ſame may be ſaid for ſeveral other Pieces of Wickedneſs. 2. Theſe Things are a plain Proof, that the Meaſures after-mentioned have been the conſtant Study and unwearied Practice of *Antichriſt*; and all own that a Habit or Courſe is worſe than a few Acts; and when Deſign and Study prepare the Way to the *Malefice*, it is more aggravated than if it were *Chance-meddling*. A ſhort View of theſe Effects will give more Light to this: They are three;

The 1. Is taken from her Influence upon whole Bodies of Men, called in the Text Nations, *All Nations have drunk of the Wine of the Wrath of her Fornication.* This at firſt View may ſeem to infer, that theſe *Nations* who drunk, and not *Babylon* who only prepared the Liquor, ſhould be puniſhed: But if we add to this, what is ſaid, *Chap.* xiv. 8. *She made all Nations drink of the Wine*, &c. which neceſſarily muſt be included here, then we are freed from the Neceſſity of fleeing to the worſt Shift of correcting the Original; which I cannot think the Authority of ſome Readings can ſufficiently juſtify, unleſs they had other more forcible Reaſons than what I find adduced here, for indeed the Context advances all they contend for. Tho' a ſinful *Comptiance*, even when extorted, will not exculpate the *Conformiſt* with *Antichriſt*, but he will thereby contract a damnable Guilt; Yet at the ſame Time the great Iniquity of *Babylon* is declared from theſe malignant Influences of her Endeavours, when whole Nations, or the far greater Part of them, are debauched, and eſpecially if this Infection be ſo univerſal as contaminate *all Nations*, as in the Text. As for the Senſe of the Words, we had it before, *Chap.* xiv. 8.

2. From the Influence of *Babylon* upon Kings, *The Kings of the Earth have committed Fornication with her.* The Senſe of this is given above, *Chap.* xvii. 2. If the unthinking Populace had only been deceived, Methods might have been taken for their better Information: But when ſhe has bewitched even the great and wiſe *Kings*, by whoſe Example their Subjects muſt be directed, this aggravates her Guilt.

3. From the great Returns Merchants made by their Trade with her, *The Merchants of the Earth are waxed rich through the Abundance* [Orig. Vertue or Efficacy] *of her Delicacies.* Who theſe Merchants are, will not be eaſy to determine: We find them deſcribed from the *Goods* they deal in, *v.* 12, 13, 14. From their *Relation* to *Babylon*, called *her Merchants*; which ſays plainly they had no other *Trade* but with *Babylon*, and were much in her *Favour*. They are alſo deſcribed by their Character in the World, *v.* 23. *Thy Merchants are the great Men of the Earth*; They are not mean and pitiful Hawkers or Pedlars, but Men of Diſtinction, yea, as great as *Kings*. It may be asked, What we are to mean by *Merchants*, whether *Buyers* or *Sellers*? Anſwer, The original Force of the Word will bear both, for it ſignifies one whoſe Buſineſs is to travel: And we ſee they are taken in both Senſes by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, Chap. xxvii. 12. or for theſe who barter one Commodity with another: So here, *v.* 12. we have mention of the Goods they exported, and, *v.* 14. of theſe they imported; and therefore by *Merchants* we are to mean all that have *Dealings* with *Babylon*. We are further to notice the Condition of theſe Merchants, and the Cauſe thereof.

(1.) Their Condition, *They are rich.* This, in Scripture, is meant ſometimes of external or worldly Riches, and ſometimes it is taken in a ſpiritual Senſe, as *Rev.* iii. 17. If we underſtand it in both, it will give a full View of it, which will be more plain in the following Part of the Chapter; For *Babylon* has *Wares* that ſhe expoſes to *Sale*, and makes conſiderable Returns thereof: But when we ſpeak of ſpiritual Riches, we are to take it to be meant in Conceit and Opinion, and not in Truth.

(2.) The Cauſe of theſe Riches, *Through the Vertue or Power of her Delicacies*, or rather *Luxury*. It is a *Metaphor* from a fat Horſe without any Curb or Bridle, that goes which Way he will; ſo it is with *Babylon*, ſhe is without Bands, and has no other Rule but Will and Pleaſure: It is but a graceleſs Imploy to be *Caterers* for *Luſt*. Here is is a notable Aggravation of the Sin of this *Whore*, whoſe inſatiable *Luxury* imployed ſo many and conſiderable Tools to gratify the ſame. *Antichriſt* drives a ſtrong Trade, and ſells every Thing. It is as true of *Mahomet* as the *Pope*, *Sunt cuncta venalia Romæ*; and the Returns they make of theſe Wares, feed their Luxury to the greateſt Pitch.

By adding the Effect of the firſt *Vial* to the Work of this *Angel*, it will appear theſe Verſes are the Illuſtration of that Vial; for the terrible Threatnings directed againſt *Babylon*, will render her Hands feeble, and unable to do any Thing for herſelf, for they are like the *Mene Tekel* written againſt Old *Babylon*; and eſpecially, if we ſuppoſe God will ſmite ſome of theſe Dominions belonging to the Beaſt with a Peſtilence. But to be ſure theſe bold Warnings given her of her approaching Ruin, will raiſe a Pain and Anguiſh of Mind, equal to a painful *Botch*.

Amplification of VIAL. II.

WE had the Emblem of this, *Chap.* xvi. 3. where it was poured out upon the Sea, and made it like Blood, ſo that all Creatures died therein: Here it is illuſtrate, *v.* 4, and 5. which is a Call to the People of God to ſeparate from *Babylon*.

4 And I heard another Voice from Heaven, ſaying, Come out of her, my People, that ye be not Partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not of her Plagues.

5 For her Sins have reached unto Heaven, and God hath remembred her Iniquities.

Here are, 1. The Speaker. 2. The Call. 3. The Reaſons enforcing.

I. The Speaker, *I heard another Voice from Heaven.* There is no Word of any *Angel* as before, but ſimply of *a Voice*; and therefore Expoſitors have different Thoughts about it. Some think this to be the Work of a *Goſpel-miniſtry*, but the Word *Angel* concealed, becauſe the Work is invidious. But this is weak; for the Work is not invidious at all, and not ſo much provoking as what we have, *v.* 2. Beſides, the Deſignation *Angel* is very general, and can give but a ſlender Account of the Perſons. Others tell us, It is the Voice of private Chriſtians: But this bears hard upon both Chriſtian *Magiſtrates* and *Miniſters*, to imagine them ſo remiſs in their proper Work, that private Perſons, who have not their Call, ſhould take the Work out of their Hands; which on no Account can be allowed: For, no doubt, when that Time comes, God will give the Church one Mind, and they will work to others Hands. Beſides, one would think the ſame Phraſe in this Prophecy ſhould always have the ſame Senſe, when there is nothing in the Text that obliges to take it in another: Now, this is not the firſt Time this Expreſſion has occurred; for we have it, *Chap.* xiv. 13. where none take it for the Voice of the *Populacy*, and there is as little Reaſon for it here. But the ſureſt Method we can have is from the Text, where the Voice calls to Separation, and deſigns theſe who ſhould ſeparate, *My People*; which could not in any Propriety come from the *People*, but it is certainly the Voice of God, whoſe his People only are; ſo that this is the Voice of God from the Throne, that *John* heard. And the Accompliſhment thereof may point at the Power of God in an extraordinary Manner accompanying the *Call* of the *Goſpel*, which then will be moſt effectual; for the *Voice* of God not only calls Things which are, but what is not, is by his *Voice* made to be: So that then that ſame Almighty Power will be imployed to bring the Elect out of *Babylon*, was exerciſed in the Creation of the World, which cannot fail of Succeſs.

II. The Call itſelf, *Come out of her, my People.* We have many ſuch Calls as this in Scripture to the People of God, when Wrath was ready to ſeize his and their Enemies. *Moſes* had ſuch a Call as this, *Numb.* xvi. 26. *Depart, I pray you, from the Tents of theſe wicked Men*, viz. *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*. Thus the *Angel* ſpoke to *Lot*, Gen. xix. 12. *Bring them* [thy Relations] *out of this Place*. The like is ſaid of *literal Babylon*, Iſa. xlviii. 20. *Go ye forth out of* Babylon, *flee from the* Chaldeans.

Jer.

Jer. l. 8. *Remove out of the Midſt of* Babylon, *and go forth out of the Land of the* Chaldeans. And yet more plainly, *Jer.* li. 6. *Flee out of the Midſt of* Babylon, *and deliver every Man his Soul; be not cut off in her Iniquity, for this is the Time of the Lord's Vengeance,* Again, *Zech.* ii. 7. *Deliver thyſelf, O* Zion, *that dwelleſt with the Daughter of* Babylon. It is not to be doubted but the Spirit of God alludes to theſe and other Scriptures to this Purpoſe, and from them we may be helped to the Meaning of this Call, where I particularly notice, 1. To whom it is directed. 2. What they are exhorted to. 3. Whence they come.

1. To whom this Call is directed, *My People.* Under the *Old Teſtament* Diſpenſation, this Deſignation was proper to the *Jews,* and ſuch as were incorporated with them; under the *New Teſtament,* it belongs to all the *Elect,* whether already called, or to be called; as, 2 *Cor.* vi. 16. *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my People.* v. 18. *I will be a Father unto you, and ye ſhall be my Sons and Daughters, ſaith the Lord Almighty.* Theſe few Things ſeem to be wrapt up in it, 1. They are ſuch whom God from all Eternity *choſe* in *Jeſus Chriſt,* to be to the Praiſe of the Riches of his Grace in a Redeemer. 2. Such whom he has *called,* or will *call* in Time, by the *Word of the Truth of the Goſpel,* to forſake their Sin, and cleave unto Chriſt their Head and Husband. 3. Such as will bind down themſeves to a religious and conſtant Obſervation of all his Commands, by his Grace.

2. What he exhorts them to, *Come out.* It is an *Imperative,* and has the Force of a Command, eſpecially if we conſider who gives it, and the Certifications after added: The Goſpel-Senſe of this we have in ſeveral parallel Paſſages, 2 *Cor.* vi. 17. *Come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate, ſaith the Lord; Touch not the unclean Thing.* Acts ii. 40. *Save yourſelves from this untoward Generation.* So that we are under no Neceſſity of underſtanding by this a *local* Seceſſion only, or Departure, tho' I ſhall not refuſe this may alſo make up ſome Part of the Senſe: But what I take to be the chief Intendment of it, is, *a moral Separation* from *Antichriſt,* both in Principle and Practice; this is unqueſtionable from the next Clauſe, *That ye be not Partakers of her Sins.* And ſo the plain Meaning is, They are called to break off Communion with the Man of Sin, 2 *Cor.* vi. 14. *For what Fellowſhip hath Righteouſneſs with Unrighteouſneſs? and what Communion hath Light with Darkneſs?* From this Senſe there are theſe Corolaries ſeem very deducible,

(1.) There will be a Multitude of God's *Elect,* living in *Communion* with *Antichriſt,* even when he is Judgment-ripe: The Lord does not always, nay, has not as yet made any *local* Separation betwixt his People and his Enemies; but they live together, and grow together in the ſame Place. God, for holy and wiſe Ends, ſuffers his *Elect* for ſome Time to go very great Lengths with the Wicked, and to communicate with them: But theſe are not *Apoſtates* who decline from the Truth, only by the ſovereign Providence of God, drew their firſt Breath under the Influence of *Antichriſtianiſm,* and ſo, for Want of a clearer Light, muſt continue with them till the Time God calls them; as it was at *Corinth,* when the Holy Ghoſt told the Apoſtle, *Acts* xviii. 10. *I have much People in this City.* God's People were there mixed with the Herd of Idolaters for a long Time; but then he ſent *Paul* to them, by whoſe Miniſtry they were converted; and therefore he had that Viſion.

Object. It is ſaid, *Rev.* xiii. 8. *All that dwell upon the Earth ſhall worſhip him, whoſe Names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life.* Which ſeems plainly to ſay, That none of God's *Elect* will join Iſſue with *Antichriſt*; and conſequently this muſt be meant of a *local Separation* allenarly: Beſides, it makes the Senſe to be eaſier; becauſe it is not to be doubted but God had, has, and will always have a Number of Saints both in *Popiſh* and *Mahometan* Countries, where they may ſafely ſojourn, till the Fulneſs of *Antichriſt*'s Time come. *Anſwer,* 1. There is no doubt but all along, ſince the firſt Dawning of Chriſtianity, God hath had, and will *have in all Nations, ſome that fear him and work Righteouſneſs*; And theſe will not worſhip the Beaſt, but by the Bleſſing of God may be ſucceſful in their Endeavours for the Converſion of other Elect Souls; and, by this Method, *a Seed be preſerved where Satan's Seat is*: Yet this is managed in a very ſecret and indiſcernible Manner; their Numbers being ſmall, makes them eſcape the Obſervation of the *Beaſt*: And when that Time comes, wherein *Babylon* is to *fall,* they may be very ſerviceable to inſtruct others in a more publick Manner. What elſe are theſe than the two Witneſſes that propheſy in Sackcloth Forty two Months? But, 2. Tho' it be ſaid in the Text, *That only theſe whoſe Names are not written,* &c. *ſhall worſhip the Beaſt*; We are not to extend the Senſe of this ſo far, as conclude, that never any of God's *Elect* ſhould for ſhorter or longer Time communicate with the Beaſt: Nor can we take that for the Senſe of the Text; yea, I am ſure it is not: For, were not many of *our worthy Reformers* of the *Popiſh Communion,* and ſome

of them very zealous that Way ſome while before their Converſion, and yet afterwards were honoured of God for great and excellent Purpoſes? The like Period to this in our Text, was that in the Beginning of the Goſpel, when the Apoſtle, ſpeaking of the former Times, calls them *The Times of Ignorance which God winked at, but then called every Man every where to repent.* Juſt ſo, the *Times of Antichriſt's* prevailing, are Times of Ignorance; but when the ſet Time is come, God will ſend forth his glorious Goſpel to open their Eyes, and *turn them from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God*: And therefore the objected Text is to be underſtood of thoſe that live and die in the Communion of the *Whore*, and not of a temporary Symbolizing therewith, while they know no better. And conſequently this Exhortation is not to be meant entirely of a *local* Separation: Nor indeed was there any local Separation by theſe Nations who threw off the *Pope's Yoke* at the *Reformation*; the People continued where they were *locally*, but did *morally* ſeparate, for this was their plain Duty.

(2.) All God's People muſt and will certainly *ſeparate* from *Antichriſt*. They are out of the Way to Heaven, while they follow the Beaſt; which is what I take to be the Senſe of the objected Text, *Rev.* xiii. 8. This Seceſſion ſhews them not to have been of *Antichriſt*; juſt as we may reaſon, *Apoſtates* from Chriſt were not of his Flock. After this Manner our Prophet reaſons, 1 *John* ii. 19. *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifeſt they were not all of us.* There is nothing more equal, than that we ſhould reaſon the ſame Way concerning that Multitude of the Elect will be in Communion with *myſtical Babylon* before her Downfall; They by their Separation will make it ſelf-evident, *That they were not of her, elſe no doubt they would have continued with her*, which however they will not do.

3. Whence hey were to come, *Out of her.* Which is certainly to be meant of *Babylon*, v. 2. Which in my Opinion furniſheth a very ſtrong Reaſon why we are not by this *Babylon* to mean the City of *Rome* allenarly; becauſe, if we ſhould take it ſo, it would follow, that all God's Enemies ſhould be circumſcribed within the Walls of that one Town, as the *Chaldean* Army was within the Walls of *literal Babylon*, which is a manifeſt Falſhood; for there will be as inveterate Enemies to Chriſt's Kingdom, and in greater Numbers, in other Places and Cities, who would all eſcape: Which is not ſuppoſable. Yea, even tho' we ſhould allow the whole Popiſh Intereſt to be comprehended under *Babylon*, it will make a very narrow and ſtraitned Senſe of the *Whore*, and the *Beaſt*, and *Babylon*, which I have proven to be all Terms of the ſame Extent: For, by this, all the *Mahometan* Intereſt ſhould be cut off from making any Part of this *ſpiritual Babel*; And yet it is certain, that Deluſion has infected a far greater Part of the World than ever *Popery* did: Beſides, there ſhould be no Room for *Heatheniſm*, which is as broad as any of them; and therefore it would do better to take in all the three.

III. The Reaſons enforcing this Exhortation, from theſe following Topicks;

1. From their different, yea, oppoſite Natures; *Ye are my People*, whom I have ſeparate from the World, and ſet a part for myſelf: Whereas they are of *Babylon* that great Whore, and there can be no Communion betwixt Light and Darkneſs. *Babylon* is a Strumpet, not my Wife; ye are my Children, not her's; neither is ſhe your Mother, but your Oppreſſor, that has kept you in Bondage of Ignorance and Idolatry.

2. From the Participation of her Sins, *That ye be not Partakers of her Sins.* Some make this a Dehortation, *Be ye not Partakers of her Sins*; as we have another to the ſame Purpoſe, *Eph.* v. 11. *Have no Fellowſhip with the unfruitful Works of Darkneſs, but rather reprove them.* This Senſe, tho' it be true, and couched up in the former Call, yet is not agreeable to the Words of the Text; for it would make a Word redundant, and oblige us to turn the *Verb* out of one *Mode* into another. It is beſt therefore to let it have the Force of a Reaſon, and a ſtrong One it is, and contains in it an heavy Threatning, If they did not *divide* from *Babylon*, they would be involved in her Guilt; eſpecially, they having had ſuch a clear Call to ſeparate: And is the ſame in Purport with what Chriſt advances, *John* xv. 22. *If I had not come unto them, they had not haa Sin; but now they have no Cloke for their Sin.* As for the Compliance they made before, in regard it was in Ignorance and Unbelief, God will be gracious to them in Chriſt; But if after this plain Warning they ſhall perſiſt, their Guilt will then be more aggravated.

Here we ſee, 1. The great Care of Chriſt is agreeable to the Deſign of his Coming, *to ſave his People from their Sins*, and from running deeper in the Score of Guilt. 2. The Deſign of this is to preſs an open and avowed Breach with *Babylon*. They might be under ſome Neceſſity before to conceal the Profeſſion of the Truth, even tho' convin-

vinced of it; as it was with many in Chriſt's Time, who *believed* on him, but, for Fear of Conſequents, *did not confeſs him.* Chriſt will not have his People *Night-Diſciples*; they muſt with the utmoſt Hazard *confeſs* him before Men, and give a Teſtimony againſt *Babylon*; for they may be ſaid to partake of other Mens Sins, who do not reprove them.

3. From the Danger of ſharing in *Babylon*'s Plagues, *That ye receive not of her Plagues*: Which I think is not ſo to be underſtood, as if theſe Plagues ſhould in common light upon the *Elect*, and the *Babylonians*; for the Manner of the Expreſſion will not allow this; the plain Senſe of which is, Leſt ye meet with ſome of her *Plagues*, but not to the utmoſt, as will fall to her Share: The Import whereof I take to be, if they did not yield to the Voice, an heavy Rod, not unlike *Babylon*'s Plagues, would be imploy'd againſt them, and oblige them to ſeparate. This ſhews the Heavineſs of *Babylon*'s Plagues, while the ſmalleſt Meaſure or Degree of them is terrible; as *Lot*'s Family was in imminent Hazard of ſharing of the Judgment inflicted upon *Sodom*, and ſome of them did meet with it. So that the Scope of this Reaſon is to engage them cheerfully to abandon *Babylon*, without any Hankering after the ſame, or any Thing in it: And it teaches us what Sort of *Topicks* the Miniſtry will at that Time be directed to, to prevail with the *Elect* to yield to their *Maſter's Call.*

4. From the Greatneſs of *Babylon*'s Sins, *v.* 5. which alſo juſtifies God in the Execution of his Wrath, *For her Sins have reached* [followed] *unto Heaven.* We had ſomething like this ſaid of literal *Babylon*, Jer. li. 9. *For her Judgment reacheth unto Heaven, and is lifted up even to the Skies.* *Ezra* alſo in his Confeſſion ſays, *Ezra* ix. 6. *Our Iniquities increaſe over our Head, and our Treſpaſs is grown up unto Heaven.* It is then plainly a *Hebraiſm*; but what the proper Senſe is, will not be ſo eaſy, becauſe of the different Thoughts of the Learned: Some think, no more is contained here, but that the Cry of her Sins had gone up to Heaven; as is ſaid of *Cain*'s Guilt, *Gen.* iv. 10. *The Voice of thy Brother's Blood crieth to me from the Ground.* And of *Sodom* it it ſaid, *Gen.* xviii. 20. *The Cry of* Sodom *and* Gomorrah *is great, and her Sin is very grievous.* And of *Nineveh*, Jonah i. 2. *Their Wickedneſs is come up before me.* No doubt but this is in it; but then the Difficulty is, what we ſhall do with the Verb *followeth*? For it does not ſeem fair to ſubſtitute another Verb in its Place, as ſome have done, and make it read, *Her Sins are glewed or ſodered together, even unto Heaven*; that is too much Freedom with the Text. Tho' the Words be not very unlike other in Sound, yet the Signification is different enough, ἠκολούθησαν, *ſecut aſunt*; κολληθησαν, *conglatinata ſunt.* Theſe Things ſeem to be in it, 1. That the Sins of *Babylon* are very many in their Number. 2. Theſe Sins are proper and peculiar to herſelf, and not to be met with any where elſe. 3. Theſe Sins have begun with *Babylon*, and have been carried on without Interruption through the whole Reign of *Antichriſt*; all was, is, and will be idolatrous. Many other Kingdoms change Sins, but this Sin of *Babylon* has followed her in all her Periods till the very laſt, till the Kingdom of Heaven, or a moſt perfect State of the Goſpel-Church, put an End to her and her Sin at once. This is a very ſtrong Argument preſſing their Separation from *Antichriſt*, otherwiſe they would not be meet for that glorious State of the Goſpel upon Earth.

5. From God's judicial Diſquiſition of theſe Sins, *God hath remembred her Iniquities.* There is here a Change of the Word in the Original, as well as in the Tranſlation: In the firſt Clauſe the Word ſignifies *Sin* in general; in this it reſtrains the Meaning of the Word to theſe Sins that ſavour rank of *Injuſtice* in all its Kinds, and eſpecially the Iniquity of *Babylon*'s Laws and Conſtitutions, *For Iniquity is therein eſtabliſhed by a Law.* So that God declares, he is not only to cogniſce their Practice, but the Rules they laid down for themſelves, and puniſh them for both. *Remembring* is not to be applied to God, as we underſtand it of Men, *i. e.* to call to Mind ſomething they had forgot; for God is not capable of Forgetfulneſs: But yet there is ſomething in this, that looks like what really is in Man; for God had neglected *Babylon* now full One thouſand two hundred and ſixty Years, and ſuffered her to uſe her *Sorceries* without Check, which looks as if God had forgotten her; we had this before explained on *Chap.* xvi. 19. Tho' it be more full here, the Senſe is the ſame, and ſignifies that tho' God had long delayed, as if he had forgot, yet he will then give a terrible Diſcovery that he had a perfect Knowledge of all *Babylon*'s Sins, which he will manifeſt in the Puniſhment thereof.

There appears a great Congruity betwixt this and the ſecond Vial; for by the powerful and effectual Preaching of the Goſpel, and other Methods will then be uſed, there may be expected the Converſion of many from among the *Papiſts* and *Mahometans*, and that they will be reformed; for it is preſumable a great Number of the Elect will then exiſt, whoſe Defections will make the *Babylonians* Blood like that of a dead Man.

Amplification of VIAL III.

WE have the Emblem of this, *Chap.* xvi. 4—8. *It was poured out upon the Rivers and Fountains, and made them Blood*; here it is illuſtrate, from *v.* 6. to *v.* 9. and is plainly a Continuation of the ſame Voice was *v.* 4. and ſo it is the Voice of God ſpeaking to theſe converted under the former Vial, who had thrown off the Yoke of *Antichriſt*.

It may be here enquired, Why theſe two Vials, *viz.* the ſecond and third, ſhould here in the Illuſtration be aſcribed to God, when the Vials themſelves, *Chap.* xvi. are ſaid to be diſpenſed by *Angels*, eſpecially that the firſt, fifth, *&c.* in this, and theſe in the next Chapters, are ſaid to be by the Miniſtry of Angels?

Anſwer. What in the firſt Account of theſe Vials is made the Work of *Angels*, is to ſhew that God will uſe Inſtruments to accompliſh his Vengeance upon his Enemies, and, becauſe he will ſtir them up to his Work of Retribution, they are called *Angels*: And here there is only mentioned the Call of God, without any Notice of *Angels*, to teach us the Infallibility of the Thing, that it cannot fail; and to ſhew us, theſe to whom the Call is given, will act ſo as it ſhall appear they are immediately directed of God, as was *Gideon*, and others of the old Worthies. This is Matter of Comfort to the Church.

Here we have, 1. The Directions given to the Executers of God's Will againſt *Antichriſt*, v. 6, and 7. 2. The Conſequents thereof; with proper Reaſons to both.

6 Reward her even as ſhe rewarded you, and double unto her double, according to her Works: In the Cup which ſhe hath filled, fill to her double.

7 How much ſhe hath glorified herſelf, and lived deliciouſly, ſo much Torment and Sorrow give her: For ſhe ſaith in her Heart, I ſit a Queen, and am no Widow, and ſhall ſee no Sorrow.

It is plain, the Voice here is directed to theſe called on in the *ſecond Vial* to make *Seceſſion* from *Babylon*, now under the *third*, to exert themſelves to the utmoſt againſt her; for the Diſcourſe is continued to the ſame Perſons; ſo that, as they got Grace to ſeparate under the laſt *Vial*, they are now armed with Vengeance againſt her under *this*.

Object. This croſſeth the Rule of Charity, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 15. *See that none render Evil for Evil.* Prov. xvii. 13. *Whoſo rewardeth Evil for Evil, Evil ſhall not depart from his Houſe.*

This Objection, when fortified by theſe and other Scriptures to the ſame Purpoſe, has ſtraitned ſome, who, to eſcape the Force thereof, have uſed odd Shifts, as, That this Advice is not given to the People of God, but to the Armies of *Babylon*, who', they think, will be employed to deſtroy her: But the Reading of the Text ſhews this to be falſe; for theſe *Soldiers* had met with no Injury from *Babylon*, yet theſe here imployed had met with the hardeſt Meaſures from her. Others, again, underſtand this of the *Prayers* of the Church, and of a Spirit of *Prophecy*, which God will give at that Time: But they ſhould conſider, that if it be inconſiſtent with the Rules of Chriſtianity, to *execute* Revenge upon our Adverſaries, it is no leſs againſt the ſame Rules, to wiſh or pray for it; ſo that this Diſtinction will not mend the Matter. The Truth is, the Texts objected, are miſunderſtood by the Objectors; for they only inhibit *private Revenge*, which on no Account is lawful: But, neither do they diſcharge an injured Chriſtian to ſue for Reparation, in a legal Way, from thoſe who have wronged him, nor to repel unjuſt Force for Force; and much leſs publick *Revenge*, which God calls his People ſo oft to, thorow the whole Old Teſtament, and approved their Efforts this Way; and therefore the Spirit of God beſtows ſuch large Encomiums upon the *Champions* of his Cauſe and People, which no doubt will be the Caſe in the Period here ſpoke of. But we come to view the Directions themſelves, in Number four;

1. *Reward her even as ſhe rewarded you*; or, *Render to her as ſhe hath rendred to you*: So we find the Word tranſlated, 1 *Pet.* iii. 9. *Not rendring Evil for Evil.* For tho' the Judgments *Antichriſt* will meet with, may be juſtly deſigned a *Reward*, yet in no tolerable Senſe can her *Malice* and *Cruelty* againſt the Lord's People be called ſo. 'Tis true, they look upon what they do againſt the *Saints*, as a juſt Retribution

for

for their *Separation* from them, which is alſo one of her *Errors*; yet this is not leſs than what the Church may look for, from this *Mother of Abominations.*

Object. 1. This Command ſeems to order the Saints to treat *Babylon* with Falſhood, and all Manner of Wickedneſs, croſs the Nature of *Chriſtianity.*

Anſw. There is no ſuch Thing neceſſarily implied in this Direction; for, tho' it points in ſome Meaſure at *Retaliation*, yet even *lex talionis* does not require that one Piece of *Injuſtice* ſhould be repaid with another: For, when it is ſaid, *He that ſheddeth Man's Blood, by Man ſhall his Blood be ſhed*, i. e. Life for Life; yet all ſees there is a great Difference betwixt the Crime and the Puniſhment, yea they agree in nothing but *ſhedding of Blood*: For Murder is the Deed of an *Aſſaſſine* againſt all *Law*, from a Principle of *Malice*; but the *Death* of the *Criminal* is by the *Sentence* of a Judge, well grounded on Evidence, and paſt according to *Law*, and in the Fear of the Lord. In other Caſes, there may be an Obſervation of *lex talionis* in Point of Juſtice, where there is little or no *Agreement* betwixt the Facts, *e. g.* the Judge may juſtly oblige the *Thief* to make *Reſtitution* of the Damages done his Neighbour, without allowing the Perſon injured, to ſteal as much from the *Thief*: Juſt ſo here, there is no Agreement, except in the Pain, Trouble and Loſs, which *Antichriſt* will be as ſenſible of in his Day, as ever the People of God were, or are, of theſe Miſeries which *Babylon* did bring upon them. But then, it was *Murder*, *Rapine* and *Villany* in Antichriſt; whereas this will be *Juſtice* in the Church, who, as we ſee, has the Sentence of the *Judge of all the Earth* to warrant her. This is juſtified by equivalent Expreſſions anent *literal* Babylon, to which no doubt this alludes, *Jer.* l. 15. *Take Vengeance upon her; as ſhe hath done, do unto her.* q. d. Shew her no Pity, as ſhe ſhewed no Pity: Here is holy Juſtice in the Retribution, but none in the Crime. Again, *Jer.* li. 35. *The Violence done to me, and my Fleſh, be upon* Babylon, *ſhall the Inhabitant of* Zion *ſay*: *And my Blood upon the Inhabitants of* Chaldea, *ſhall* Jeruſalem *ſay.* And, *Pſal.* cxxxvii. 8. *O Daughter of* Babylon, *who art to be deſtroyed, happy ſhall he be that rewardeth thee as thou haſt ſerved us.*

Object. 2. It ſeems this Direction is not given to theſe that ſeparate from *Babylon* under the *ſecond Vial*, but to theſe who all along had *refuſed* Communion with her: How can it be ſaid that *Babylon* had uſed Violence upon them in Communion with her before their Separation? and conſequently it is directed to others than theſe mentioned, *v* 4.

Anſw. No doubt *Antichriſt* will be much provoked by theſe who deſert his Cauſe, and will deſign and endeavour their utter Ruin and Extirpation. This we ſee has been his *Way* from the Beginning; and that they will not then prevail againſt him, is not Want of *Will*, but of *Power*: And here the Juſtice of the Retribution turns upon the Malignity of his Inclinations. Again, theſe having *ſeparated* from *Antichriſt*, and come out of *Babylon*, will incorporate with the Number of Saints with the *Lamb*, and ſo there will be a perfect Harmony of both *Principles* and *Purpoſes*; and ſo, whatever was formerly done againſt their Brethren, may be ſaid to be done againſt them, who will now take Part with them both in *Compaſſion* and *Revenge*: So that there remains no Difficulty from the Objection, becauſe always the *Malice* of *Babylon* was, and is directed againſt the *Saints* as ſuch.

2. *Double unto her Double, according to her Works.* This Direction is ſlightly paſſed over by ſome, and a great many Difficulties moved about it by others. In general, note, when the firſt and ſecond Parts are joined together, as of Neceſſity we muſt, there can be no *Injuſtice* in it; for, how can Severity or a Stretch of Juſtice take Place, where there is ſuch an exact Commenſuration betwixt their Puniſhment and Guilt as is here mentioned, *according to her Works*? But ſtill the Difficulty remains, about *Doubling*: Some tell us, That, as Antichriſt had two great and clamant Sins, *viz. Error* and *Perſecution*; ſo his Judgment will conſiſt of two Branches, *viz. Infatuation* and *Deſolation.* It is curious, and not without Truth: However, I am ready to believe, there is in this, as well as the former Direction, an Alluſion to ſome prophetical Expreſſions to the ſame Purpoſe, and from whence the Senſe of it is to be fetched, as, *Iſa.* xl. 2. *Jeruſalem hath received of the Lord's Hand, double for all her Sins.* Where we are not to think God had inflicted upon his People *twice* as much as their Sins did deſerve, this Thought were impious: For, we have two Clauſes in the ſame Text, which baffles that; *Her Warfare is accompliſhed, her Iniquity is pardoned.* Whence, 'tis plain, if her Stroke had come up to her Guilt, tho' it had not doubled it, this would have been Satisfaction; and, if an Atonement be, there is no Room for Pardon. As little can we think it will take Place here, nay, we are ſure it cannot; for, after all theſe temporal *Plagues* mentioned here, *Antichriſt* is to be damned hereafter, as we read, *Chap.* xix. and xx. We have an Expreſſion to this Purpoſe by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Chap. xvi.

18. *I will recompenſe their Iniquity and their Sin double.* Again, *Ezek.* xxi. 14. *Let the Sword be doubled the third Time.* In none of all which Places it is poſſible to underſtand it of *twice* ſo much as their Sin deſerves. Others think, again, and not without Reaſon, That this Expreſſion has Alluſion to the Puniſhment inflicted upon *Theft*, for they were appointed to *pay double*, Exod. xxii. 4. To be ſure *Antichriſt* is the great ſpiritual *Thief* and *Robber*. In *Criminals*, the greateſt Lawiers affirm the Crime muſt be outdone by the Puniſhment, elſe the Sentence is not right or juſt; As an Eye can be no Compenſation for an Eye ſtruck out, but ſomething over and above this, muſt in Juſtice be inflicted on the Mutilator. In ſhort, this Direction, as it ſtands in the Text, and as we found it uſed in other Scriptures, ſeems to comprehend theſe Things, 1. This Stroke will be very obſervable, both to *Babylon* who will be ſenſible of it, and to others who will have the Satisfaction to ſee it. 2. It will not be abſolved at once, there will be more Blows than one. 3. It will be very juſt, tho' it will be heavy, but no more than Juſtice requires. 4. There will be a very notable Harmony betwixt *Babylon*'s Sin and Puniſhment.

3. *In the Cup which ſhe hath filled, fill to her double*: Or, *In the Cup which ſhe hath mixed, mix to her double.* We ſpoke of *Cup* on *Chap.* xiv. 10. Here the Lord ſeems to have Regard to the Miſchief ſhe brought upon the People of God for the whole Space of Forty two Months; where there is a twofold Agreement betwixt the Judgment of *Babylon*, and her Sin; 1. As to the *Meaſure*; the Cup will be of as great Capacity as what ſhe fills out to the People of God. 2. As to the *Taſte* of it; it will be as bitter to her, as hers was to the Saints: So it is ſaid to be *mixed*; that, like as ſhe did purſue the Church, not with one Sort of Calamities, but a Multitude of them; ſo, when God comes to plead with her, there will be a bitter Mixture of ungrateful Ingredients in the *Cup*.

4. *How much ſhe hath glorified herſelf, and lived deliciouſly, ſo much Torment and Sorrow give her*, v. 7. Here we have her *Miſery* commenſurate with her *Proſperity*, which the Executioners of God's Juſtice are to have a ſpecial Regard to. We are to view, 1. Her Proſperity. 2. Her Miſery, that will bear Proportion thereto.

(1.) Her Proſperity, in two Expreſſions. 1. *She glorified herſelf*: This is the Verification of another Prophecy, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 4. *Who oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf above all that is called God, or is worſhipped: So that he as God ſitteth in the Temple of God, ſhewing himſelf that he is God.* i. e. She raiſeth herſelf above all other ſacred and civil Powers; and is the whole of what we had before, *Chap.* xvi. 4, 5. This *Babylon* now makes the greateſt Figure in the World. 2. *She lived deliciouſly*, or wantonly: The ſame Word we had in the Cloſe of *v.* 3. In a Word, theſe two ſignify *Pride, and Fulneſs of Bread*; which is reckoned the Sin of *Sodom*, and ſo of *Antichriſt*.

(2.) Her Miſery, in other two Expreſſions, the very Reverſe of the former two; 1. *Torment*, the ſame in Sound and Senſe with what we had on *Chap.* xiv. 11. and is as contrary to the Glorifying of herſelf, as Hell is to Heaven. Theſe two Words expreſs the Condition of them in either of theſe Places: In Heaven the Saints are *glorified*; in Hell the Damned are *tormented*. 2. *Grief*, which is oppoſed to Wantonneſs or Pleaſure: This Paſſion is a moſt afflicting Senſe from the Want of what we once had and valued, or from the troubleſom Senſe of ſome Evil that is moſt croſs our Inclinations: So that *Babylon* will be brought as low as ever ſhe was high, and have as much Sorrow as ever ſhe had Satisfaction. Then will the Words of *Solomon* be verified, *Prov.* xvi. 18. *Pride goeth before Deſtruction, and a haughty Spirit before a Fall.*

There are next the Reaſons and Grounds inforcing theſe Directions, which are the Diſcoveries of that great Pride wherewith *Babylon* is ſtuff'd, and of a Piece with the Opinion *literal Babylon* entertain'd of herſelf, *Iſa.* xlvii. 7, 8. *Thou ſaidſt, I ſhall be a Lady for ever: Thou ſayſt in thine Heart, I am, and none elſe beſide me; I ſhall not ſit as a Widow, neither ſhall I know the Loſs of Children.* What is *literally* underſtood of *Chaldean Babylon*, muſt be *myſtically* underſtood of *ſpiritual Babylon*: Yea, truly it is figurative in both. It is ſaid here, *She ſaid in Heart*; but in the Quotation, ſhe ſpoke it as well as thought it; and ſo both may be comprehended here: For *Antichriſt* is not only perſwaded of theſe Excellencies, but vaunts and boaſts of them; Nor is it poſſible that the Heart can be top-full of any Thing, but it will alſo drop from the Mouth. We are view theſe Reaſons ſeparately.

1*ſt* Reaſon is from her conceited Greatneſs, *I ſit a Queen*; Which is more than if ſhe had ſaid, *I am a Queen*: For, while ſhe ſays, *I ſit*, it imports not only the Greatneſs of her Character, *a Queen*, but alſo the actual Exerciſe of a *ſovereign* Power; and may be well illuſtrate by theſe Expreſſions, *I am a Lady for ever*; *I am, and there is none beſides me.* What is this elſe, but the Boaſtings of both *Mahometans* and *Papiſts*, while they contend for *Divinity* and *Infallibility*? This is the higheſt Degree of Pride,

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by which they *rival* the *Almighty*, as we heard at large on *Chap.* xiii. Theſe Idolaters arrogate to themſelves a Power and Authority paramount to all the Powers of the Earth. Pride then is one of the greateſt Grounds of Controverſy God hath with the Children of Men.

2*d* Reaſon is from her comfortable State, *I am no Widow*: This is her Security. It does not appear we ſhould rip up this Expreſſion too far, as the Text quoted would allow; where it is ſaid, *I ſhall not ſit as a Widow.* We know that the Condition of moſt Widows is very deſtitute and diſconſolate: In this Senſe we find it taken, *Lam.* i. 1. *How doth the City ſit ſolitary, that was full of People! how is ſhe become as a Widow, ſhe that was great among the Nations, and Princeſs of the Provinces! how is ſhe become tributary!* So that there is a *Meioſis* in the Expreſſion, ſhe is the very *Reverſe* of a Widow, having all Things that are pleaſant as well as uſeful. Thus, while ſhe makes this one of the Notes of her Song, ſhe is perfectly ſecure.

3*d* Reaſon is from her Preſumption, *I ſhall ſee no Sorrow*; The Senſe of that Clauſe in the quoted Text, *I ſhall not know the Loſs of Children.* Cities are called the Mothers of their Inhabitants; And ſhe preſumes here, ſhe ſhall never want Plenty of them. Indeed the *Number* of the Votaries of *myſtical Babylon* are like the *Sands* by the Sea-Shore; tho', bleſſed be God, they are come down from what they ſometime were. This ſeems to be the fixed Perſwaſion of *myſtical Babylon*, that ſhe ſhall never feel any Diſtreſs; For *Popery* has as a fundamental Principle, *Infallibility*, and *perpetual Viſibility*: The *Mahometans* make Succeſs the ſureſt Mark of God's Approbation of both their Perſons and Cauſe, which is neither leſs nor more than the other.

8 Therefore ſhall her Plagues come in one Day, Death, and Mourning, and Famine; and ſhe ſhall be utterly burnt with Fire: For ſtrong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

In theſe Conſequents we ſhall find a notable Agreement betwixt the *Sins* and *Plagues* of *Babylon*, and the Fruit of their Wickedneſs to flow in a moſt plain and natural Chain from their Guilt; and ſo it is introduced by the Illative *therefore.* About thoſe Conſequents I offer theſe few Remarks;

1. The Equity and Juſtice of theſe Judgments, *Therefore her Plagues ſhall come.* The Meaning of *Plagues* we had, *v.* 4. the procuring Cauſes are the Sins abovementioned. This will be moſt evident when the Time comes; not only ſhall others ſee the Juſtice of the Stroke, but even *Babylon* herſelf ſhall be ſo convinced thereof, as to read her Sin in her Judgment.

2. The Suddenneſs of theſe Plagues, *They ſhall come in one Day.* This Expreſſion is plainly prophetical, *Iſa.* xlvii. 9. *Theſe two Things ſhall come upon thee in a Moment, in one Day*; which afterwards is called *one Hour*, v. 10, 17, 19. I am ready to believe this contains not the Account of any preciſe or definite Time which theſe Plagues will imploy, as ſome would have it; and the rather that there are three ſeveral Dimenſions of Time, *a Minute, an Hour, a Day*; and therefore I judge we are only thereby to underſtand the Suddeneſs and Unexpectedneſs of *Babylon's* Miſery, as it was in old *Babylon*, which *Cyrus* in the Midſt of their Security did ſurprize.

3. The Nature of theſe Plagues by Detail in Number *Four*; which are the *greateſt* we can think of, and do clearly diſcover the Juſtice of God; as, 1. *Death*, which I ſee not how we can underſtand *literally* for an exterminating Blow; for, were that univerſal, there could be Room for no other: And therefore I imagine we are hereby to mean a *Peſtilence*, which brings Death to a great many; and ſo it correſponds exactly to their Sin of Preſumption, that their Condition ſhould be always proſperous, the contrary whereof this mortal Plague will make them ſufficiently ſenſible of; or it may be ſome ſudden Attack from an Enemy in the Midſt of her Security, in which the devouring Sword will cut off Multitudes. 2. *Mourning*, which is the Exerciſe of the Survivers for their dead Relations, and eſpecially if themſelves be in Hazard: This will exactly correſpond to her Pleaſure and Voluptuouſneſs. 3. *Famine*, which commonly follows both the Peſtilence and the War; becauſe People are diverted from the neceſſary Manuring of the Ground, ſo that Scarcity muſt enſue: This may be oppoſed to her Plenty and Luxury, upon which ſhe ſo much valued herſelf, and was regarded by others. 4. Burning; *ſhe ſhall be utterly burnt with Fire.* This ſeems to allude to the Deſtruction of *Sodom*, and was alſo verified in *old Babylon*, which was conſum'd to Aſhes. This I take to be the Senſe and Accompliſhment of that Prophecy, *Iſa.* xiv. 15. *Thou ſhalt be brought down to Hell, and to the Sides of the Pit.*

It is enquired here, Whether the Words are to be underſtood *literally*, as in the Caſe of *old Babylon*; or only in a *ſpiritual* Manner? I have no Difficulty to believe ſome-

thing of *both* may be comprehended therein; ſo that not only *ſpiritual Plagues* upon the Souls of *Antichriſt*'s Party, but alſo *temporal Judgments* upon their external Greatneſs (ſo far as even to reach their Perſons) are to be underſtood.

Laſtly, In the Words is the Reaſon upon which is grounded the Credibility of all, *For ſtrong is the Lord who judgeth her*. All theſe heavy Plagues, ſo ſuddenly inflicted upon ſuch a prodigious and overgrown Body as that of *Babylon*, might ſtagger the Faith of any; eſpecially if we conſider what a *ſmall Handful*, in Compariſon of her *Numbers*, will be imployed to execute the ſame: Therefore it is added, to remove all Fears that theſe Things ſhall come to paſs, that the Power of Omnipotency will be imployed therein: For, *before this God, all the Nations of the Earth are but as the ſmall Duſt in the Balance, or the Drop to the Bucket*. If it be ſaid, Was not God as ſtrong from the Beginning, and yet he did not exert his Power againſt her? The Text anſwers this, while it ſays, that will be the Time wherein he will judge her. *Babylon*'s Time will be come; and ſo, whatever Patience he had exerciſed towards her, ſhe will meet with no more, now that Juſtice and Power conſpire to her Ruin and utter Deſolation.

There is a very great Affinity betwixt the *third Vial* and *this Illuſtration* in all its Parts; the Effect of the Vial is very bloody, and ſo it is here; the Author is God Almighty in both, and unmixed Juſtice is in both: The only notable Difference is, that the Vial was poured out upon the *Rivers* and *Fountains*, of which we have no Mention here; But there is this as little to contradict it: And I ſhew'd what was moſt inſiſted on in the Vial, is commonly paſt over in the Amplification; but from both we may have a full Account of every *ſeveral* Vial.

Amplification of VIAL IV.

THE Vial itſelf is, *Chap.* xvi. 8, 9. which was poured out upon the Sun, and the Fire ſcorched Men, who blaſphemed, but did not repent. Here it is illuſtrate, from *v.* 9. to 20. It is ſtill the ſame Voice we heard, *v.* 4. *i. e.* the Voice of God, who firſt called to the Elect to ſeparate from *Babylon*, and then directed them how to carry towards her; but now, to encourage them to both, tells how theſe who adhere to this Harlot will be ſtated, when they ſee their Miſtreſs's Plagues, which we have in the Form of a doleful Sonnet, conſiſting of four Parts, according to the ſeveral Sorts of Perſons whoſe Satisfaction and Proſperity is wrapt up in the flouriſhing Condition of that Mother of Abominations. We have met with ſeveral Gratulations of the Saints upon the Advancement of Chriſt's Kingdom, which is to be raiſed upon the Ruin of *Antichriſt*'s; And here we have the Beaſt and his Friends as much dejected as the other are exalted. The Parts of this Lamentation are, 1. Of Kings, *v.* 9, 10. 2. Of Merchants Exporters, to *v.* 14. The 3. Of Merchants Importers, to *v.* 17. The 4. Of Mariners, who are Retainers to both, eſpecially the firſt, to *v.* 20.

9 And the Kings of the Earth, who have committed Fornication, and lived deliciouſly with her, ſhall bewail her, and lament for her, when they ſhall ſee the Smoke of her Burnings:

10 Standing afar off for the Fear of her Torment, ſaying, Alas, alas! that great City Babylon, that mighty City: For in one Hour is thy Judgment come.

Here we have, 1. The Perſons lamenting. 2. Their Lamentation. 3. Its Circumſtances.

I. The Perſons that led the Dance in this Tragedy, *v.* 9. at the Beginning, in theſe,

1. Their Character, *Kings of the Earth*. They are Perſons of Diſtinction, in that they are *Kings*, i. e. Rulers or Sovereigns, whoſe Example goes a great Way to the influencing of others. They are further deſigned from their Nature, *of the Earth*, which I take in Oppoſition to *the Kings of the Eaſt*, Chap. xvi. 12. and ſo they are not *Chriſtian*, but *Antichriſtian Kings*: Of theſe we enquired before, on *Chap.* vi. 15. and *Chap.* xvi. 14.

It is enquired here, Are theſe *Kings* the *ſame*, at leaſt a *Part*, of the Ten mentioned *Chap.* xvii. 16. I ſpoke a little to this on that Place: But, becauſe here ſome give them out to be a Part, if not the whole of them, and that it is not unordinary for great Men to bewail theſe Miſchiefs themſelves have been the Authors of; As *Titus* lamented

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Jeruſalem after he had deſtroyed it, *Joſeph.* Lib. VII. As did *Scipio*, when he beheld the Flames of *Carthage*. But, as I noted before, the Text does not ſay theſe Kings had any Hand in this Deſtruction, for they were at a great Diſtance from it: Nor are they here numbred, but indefinitely called *Kings*; and as little are the *ten Kings*, Chap. xvii. 12, 16. called Kings of the Earth; ſo that they ſeem plainly to be diverſe from other. I offer a Conjecture, *viz.* Theſe Kings are the ſame with theſe who are to aſſemble at the Battle of *Armageddon*, Chap. xvi. 16. To ſupport this, it would be conſidered, it is nowhere ſaid, that only ten Kings ſhall join the Whore, as it is ſaid that preciſe Number of *Ten* ſhall concur firſt to her Greatneſs, and then to her Deſtruction; and ſo theſe Kings may be different from thoſe, which their not being numbred alſo pleads. The Kings then may be a very great Number, and from all Quarters of the World; but who they will be, ſeeing the Text is ſilent, it would be unpardonable Curioſity to enquire. Only this we are ſure of, in the

2. Place, They will be Idolaters; for it is added, *They have committed Fornication with her*: Of this Clauſe ſee *v.* 3. and other Places there pointed to. Here we ſee the Ground of their Grief, *viz.* their Copartnerſhip in her Guilt. There is nothing more forcible to move Compaſſion among the Wicked, than that they are *ſocii criminis*; for they read their own Guilt in the Puniſhment of others. Thus we are determined to underſtand by theſe Kings, all theſe who ſhall adhere to the *Popiſh*, *Mahometan*, and *Heathen* Idolatry; but as for others, who will yield to the Call, *v.* 4. they are ſcor'd off from them.

3. Their Satisfaction therein, *They lived deliciouſly with her.* It is the ſame Word *v.* 7. ſo that there was no Conſtraint, but they had greedily followed the *Whore*, and took Pleaſure in all her Extravagancies. Hence it appears, this is not the Grief that a generous Spirit may be ſometimes affected with, when themſelves had the Occaſion of the Evil, as might be in *Titus* and *Scipio*, &c. but they lament their own Loſs, which they could no more hope, when *Babylon* is deſtroyed, to retrieve.

II. Their Lamentation diſcovered, 1. In the Acts. 2. From the Cauſe.

1. The Acts of this extravagant Grief are two; 1. *They bewail her.* This is the Action of the Countenance, and may be rendred, *Weep for her*, which plainly ſhews their Love to her; as weeping for the Dead is a common Sign of Love to the Perſon while alive. This was the Thought of the *Jews*, when they ſaw our Lord weep over *Lazarus*; for they ſaid, *John* xi. 3. *Behold how he loved him.* So theſe Kings weep over a fallen *Antichriſt*, becauſe they loved him while in Proſperity. The Philoſopher ſays, *Love is the Parent of Compaſſion*, and a tearing Eye the Evidence of a loving Heart; ſo that according to the Degree of the Love will the Meaſure of the Sorrow be, which here ſeems to be to an Exceſs: For it is added, 2. *They ſhall lament for her.* The Word properly imports the greateſt Diſcoveries of Sorrow, expreſſed by the Loudneſs of the Voice, and Beating of the Breaſt. It is not without Reaſon that the Learned derive κόπτω from *Kaph*, *vola Manus*, the Palm of the Hand, becauſe therewith theſe in extreme Grief beat their Breaſts, or tear their Hair. It is the ſame Word uſed to expreſs the Sorrow at the Death of *Jairus*'s only Child, *Luke* viii. 52. It imports a raging Grief, for great Sorrow never miſſeth to kindle Indignation; as we ſee in *Micah*, when his Tools of *Idolatry* were ſnatched from him, he turns *Mad-man*, and ſaid, *What have I more?* It will be juſt ſo with the Paramours of the great Whore, their Grief will rage into Madneſs, and diſcover itſelf, as in Vial 4th.

2. The Cauſe of all this ado, *When they ſhall ſee the Smoke of her Burning.* It is very ordinary in Scripture, after it has expreſſed the Greatneſs of an Affection, to advance the Cauſe, which ſerves to amplify the Nature of the Paſſion, and is to the Affected what in their Mind juſtifies their Tranſport: So at the Deſolation of *Tyrus*, it is ſaid, *Ezek.* xxvi. 17. *The Princes of the Sea ſhall take up a Lamentation, and ſay, How art thou deſtroyed!* This no doubt has reſpect to the Burning mentioned, *Chap.* xvi. 8. as occaſioned by the Fire; which brings us under no Neceſſity of underſtanding it literally, as if it were to point out the Deſolation of *Rome*; for it ſignifies the Devaſtation of *myſtical Babylon*, whoſe *Conſtitution* will at this Time be *ſhaken*, tho' I cannot think by a material Fire, no more than I believe the City to be what it is generally given out for. And ſo, by *Smoke*, we are to underſtand theſe Diſcoveries of God's Vengeance, or the Signs of theſe Plagues, which will turn all *Babylon* to Darkneſs and and Confuſion. It would further appear from this, that it will be a very great Judgment, and to be very ſudden; for Smoke is not greateſt when the Flame is moſt blazing, but while the Subject is reduced to Aſhes, then the Smoke is very great: It is ſo when a Fire is a-kindling, then Fear will be at the Height, but the Damage is a-coming. In which Senſe I rather incline to take it here, becauſe other three Vials are to come.

III. The Circumſtances of this Lamentation, exaggerate from theſe Things;

1. From the Fear that will ſeize theſe Kings, *Standing afar off, for the Fear of her Torment.* Such is the Friendſhip of this World, that when a Perſon's Need is greateſt, the Will is as reluctant as the Arm is weak to help. This will be the Condition of *Babylon*, who now ſays, *I am no Widow*, when the Day of her Viſitation comes, all her Friends have to beſtow is a Sigh or a Tear: Such as *Antichriſt* gives, will he receive; for if his own Friends are at a Pinch, the *Pope* will give a Bleſſing, ſo many Maſſes, an inſignificant Relick, or conſecrate Bable; *Mahomet*, a Bit of the ſacred Veſtments caſt once a Year from their Prophet's Shrine; the *Heathens* give an ambiguous Reſponſe: Theſe are all his faſteſt Friends can expect at their loweſt Ebb; and now, when it comes to his Turn, they are equal with them, for no ſolid Aſſiſtance is to be given. This aggravates both the *Miſery* of *Babylon*, and the *Sorrow* of her Lovers. Nor is this only the Lot of the *Enemies* of God, but even his *Elect* have this to complain of, *Pſal.* xxxviii. 11. *My Lovers and my Friends ſtand aloof from my Sore, and my Kinſmen ſtand far off.* Yea, it is further remarked concerning our bleſſed Lord, when he was in the greateſt Difficulty, there was leaſt Humane Aid or Compaſſion, *Matth.* xxvi. 58. Peter *followed him afar off into the High Prieſt's Palace.* It is true, when God's People are in Diſtreſs, however little Regard their Friends may ſhow them, they have a merciful God to notice them, even *tho' both Father and Mother ſhould forſake them*; but *Antichriſt* has God againſt him, and none for him. In this we have to remark, it is not ſo much want of *Kindneſs* to *Babylon* that makes her Lovers ſtand off, as want of *Power* and *Strength* to relieve, and a ſelfiſh Regard to themſelves; for tho' they be not diſpoſed to comply with that powerful Call, *v.* 4. *Come out of* Babylon, yet they will not (at leaſt preſently) ſtep in for her Relief, leſt they ſhould alſo meet with ſome of her Torments. It ſeems of little Moment, whether this Word rendered *Fear*, be turned *Terror* or *Fear*, ſeeing *Terror* is no more than a *great Fear*; as we find it verified of the whole Congregation of *Iſrael*, when a terrible Monument of God's Juſtice appeared before them, *Numb.* xvi. 34. *All* Iſrael *that were round about them, fled at the Cry of them; for they ſaid, Leſt the Earth ſwallow us up alſo.*

2. From their dolorous Tone, *Alas, alas!* The Adverb οὐαὶ is frequently read in the New Teſtament, but nowhere that I find rendered as here, *Alas*, but in all other Places *Wo*; particularly in this ſame Prophecy, *Chap.* viii. 13. *Wo, wo, wo to the Inhabitants of the Earth.* It is very often a *Denunciation* of Miſery: In this Senſe it is to be taken in all theſe Places where it is uſed by our Saviour and his Apoſtles. Here it is not to be ſo taken, ſeeing it is not to be ſuppoſed God would imploy ſuch unhallowed Mouths to denounce his Wrath againſt *Antichriſt*, and therefore we may well allow it to ſignify a *great Meaſure* of Grief. The *Criticks* in the *Greek* tell us, It always conſtrues with a *Dative*, either expreſt or ſuppreſt: Here it is not expreſt, and if underſtood, muſt either be *themſelves*, and ſo the Meaning is, *Wo be to us*, which is a doleful Boding of Evil to themſelves, when *Babylon* their old Friend is come to ſuch an Ebb; which may paſs well enough, and is perfectly of a Piece with the Lamentations of the Merchants and Mariners after-mentioned, who ſeem all of them to regrate themſelves as much as *Babylon*: Or the *Dative* underſtood muſt be *Babylon*, and then the Senſe is, *Wo, wo be to* Babylon. Yet will not this be an *Imprecation*, which uſeth to be more from Indignation and Malice, than from Love or Pity; but it is plain this is from Fear, ſo that the Intendment of the Exclamation is a Boding of further Calamities to *Babylon*, beſides what by all the former Vials ſhe felt. Were I to determine the Senſe of this doleful Voice, I ſhould be ready to think both theſe make up the full Meaning; which ſeems the more probable, that the Intereſt of both theſe *Kings* and *Babylon* are ſo twiſted together, that they muſt either ſtand or fall with other: And here, the *Wo* being doubled, may inſinuate ſo much as if one Part of the *Miſery* would light upon *Babylon*, and the other upon themſelves; which muſt inevitably happen, when *Babylon* the Fountain of all their Comfort, and Sanctuary in Time of Trouble, ſhall be conſumed.

3. From the great Thoughts they had entertained of *Babylon*, *That great City* Babylon, *that mighty City.* All Loſſes are greatned from the Opinion we have of the Thing, whether we think with Diſcretion or not: Now the Notions theſe Kings have of *Babylon*, are from her Extent, *That great City*, which they thought would never ſee Trouble, it being extended ſo broad and wide; of this on *Chap.* xiv. 8. And, 2. From her Strength, *That mighty City.* Many Things may be great, which have but little Strength; but *Babylon* gave Laws to the World for the Space of One thouſand two hundred and ſixty Years, againſt whom many Nations had fought, but none prevailed,

vailed, which rendered her Worſhippers as ſecure as herſelf; and to be ſo ſuddenly tumbled down, would be no leſs a Surpriſe to them than to her.

4. From the Suddenneſs of the Blow, *For in one Hour is thy Judgment come.* They ſeem to go too nicely to Work, who would reduce this to a preciſe Time, and make this Hour contain Three hundred and thirty Years and four Months, which they imagine will accompliſh *Babylon*'s Miſery: The Reaſon is fetched from Scripture, where *a thouſand Years are compared to a Watch of the Night*, *Pſal.* xc. 4. And, becauſe there were four Watches of the Night, every Watch muſt conſiſt of three Hours, and ſo one Hour be the third Part of a Watch, *i. e.* the third Part of a thouſand Years. There are ſeveral Things overturn this Cob-web; As, 1. In the Text quoted a *thouſand* Years are compared to *Yeſterday when it is paſt*: Now, if they will inſtitute a Compariſon, it muſt run as tight the one Way as the other; but a Day paſt is nothing in itſelf; and, if meaſured by other Days, then it conſiſts of twelve Hours. To be ſure the Spirit of God is not there giving a Key of the myſterious *Chronology* of Prophecies, but, after the Manner of Men, ſpeaking of the Duration of God, with whom a thouſand Years paſs away with as little Obſervation, in Compariſon of his Eternity, as three Hours in the Night, when a Man ſleeps. 2. This *Hour* muſt be the ſame with *one Day*, of which we read, *v.* 8. 3. In that of *Iſaiah* it is called *a Moment*, Chap. xlvii. which is but the ſixtieth Part of a *Minute*. So that no more can be imported here, than that the Stroke will be very ſudden and unexpected; It will fare with *Antichriſt* as with Trees, they are long a growing, but quickly cut down. But there ſeems to be be ſomewhat further in this Expreſſion, while it is ſaid to be *Babylon*'s Judgment. *i. e.* a juſt Recompence for her Sins; for, had they no ſuch View, they would not beſtow that Deſignation upon her *Wo*: So that tho' now the Worſhipers of the Beaſt cannot be convinced of any Blemiſh about him, yet, when the Juſtice of God ſhall overtake him, their Eyes will be opened, and they forced to acknowledge that *the Lord is righteous in all his Ways.*

11 And the Merchants of the Earth ſhall weep and mourn over her, for no Man buyeth her Merchandice any more.

12 The Merchandice of Gold, and Silver, and precious Stones, and of Pearls, and fine Linen, and Purple, and Silk, and Scarlet, and all Thyine Wood, and all Manner Veſſels of Ivory, and all Manner Veſſels of moſt precious Wood, and of Braſs, and Iron and Marble,

13 And Cinamon, and Odours, and Ointments, and Frankincenſe, and Wine, and Oil, and fine Flour, and Wheat, and Beaſts, and Sheep, and Horſes, and Chariots, and Slaves, and Souls of Men.

I ſaid, This is the Lamentation of the *Exporting* Merchants, as in the next we have that of the *Importers*. This is a Diſtinction I find is not noticed by Expoſitors; which has betrayed them to Abundance of Miſtakes. It is plain however theſe Merchants are Exporters, becauſe they deal in *Babylon*'s Wares. As for their Lamentation, it is ſaid, *They ſhall weep and mourn over her.* The firſt of theſe Words we had, *v.* 9. where it is rendred *wailing*; the other Word, πενθοῦσιν, rendred *to mourn*, is turned the ſame Way in many Places of Scripture, 1 *Cor.* v. 2. *Jam.* iv. 9. It properly ſignifies ſuch Grief as brings great Heavineſs of Heart, and oppreſſeth the Spirit of the Perſon; ſo that tho' theſe *Merchants* will not make ſuch a Noiſe as the *Kings*, yet they will be no leſs ſenſibly touched with the Judgment of *Babylon*, which will be no leſs afflicting to them, than to her. We have, beſides this, to conſider in the Words, 1. The Perſons. 2. The Ground of their Grief. 3. A particular Account of the Goods they exported from *Babylon.*

1. The Perſons mourning, *The Merchants of the Earth*; we heard of them on *v.* 3. where I ſhewed there is at leaſt an Alluſion to the *Traffiquers* of *Tyre*, Ezek. xxvii. 16. where it is expreſly ſaid, *v.* 17. *They traded in the Wares of* Tyre, and conſequently they were Exporters: The ſame is to be underſtood here, for theſe trade in the Wares of *Babylon*'s making. Theſe *Exporters* are called *Merchants*, becauſe they carry out the Staple Commodities of *Babylon*, and return not empty-handed, but bring with them what is moſt acceptable to her; which, on all Hands, are reckoned the intrinſick Value of her Wares. They are further deſigned *Merchants of the Earth*, becauſe of one or all of theſe Reaſons, 1. That they are of an earthly Diſpoſition, and ſo void of all Spirituality. 2. That they are great and toping Merchants, as we read, *v.* 23.

3. That they come to *Babylon*, not from any one particular Place, but from all Quarters of the World: Which ſhews *Babylon* to be a great and univerſal *Market*, reſorted to by all Nations, and not like other under-trading Towns, who have but a few Nations that deal with them.

II. The Ground of their Grief, *For no Man buyeth her Merchandice any more.* Some render this Clauſe, *No Man buyeth their Merchandice any more*; and ſo they would have the Merchandice to be imported to *Babylon*. They think themſelves juſtified by ſome Copies that read *their*, inſtead of *her*: But yet this Alteration, inſtead of removing, increaſeth the Difficulty; for it brings them under a Neceſſity of underſtanding the Merchandice aftermentioned, *literally*, and thereby thwart the whole Strain of the Prophecy. But others own a figurative Senſe of the Merchandice; and then, where ſhall they meet with any that can furniſh *Babylon* with what they conceive to be meant by them? Beſides, the Throng of theſe Interpreters, who would have theſe Goods belong to the Merchants, by *Babylon* underſtand *Rome*; and ſo they are ſtraitned how to find there, what is to be given in Return for theſe Commodities: Therefore, I think, we had beſt adhere to our own *Tranſlation*, and theſe original Copies it follows; and ſo this Merchandice is proper and peculiar to *Babylon*, and can be had nowhere elſe, as they give out. The Word rendred *Merchandice*, ſignifies the *Burden* or *Loading* of a Ship, as we are neceſſarily ſometimes to underſtand it, *Acts* xxi. 3. *The Ship was to unlade her Burden.* This alſo may be look'd upon as the Ground why ſome think this Merchandice belongs to the *Merchants*, and not to *Babylon*, becauſe they read of a *Loading* or *Cargo* of a Ship, which, they think, theſe Merchants brought along with them. But this Difficulty will quickly be over, if we conſider, theſe Ships (if any be ſuppoſed in this Part of the Prophecy) may as well be loaded as livered at *Babylon*; and thence it will clearly follow, the Merchandice may be hers: But, ſeeing we have the Lamentation of Seamen, *v.* 17. it may be thought there needs be no Account of them here. Tho' this Word γόμος ſignifies a Loading in ſome Places, yet I ſee no Neceſſity to believe it muſt be always ſo taken, eſpecially that it is ſo ſeldom uſed in the New Teſtament: Beſides, I am ſatisfied, when the Word is traced to the utmoſt, it is more capable of another Signification; for it is from the *Arabick* Word *Gamah*, which ſignifies a *Fardle* or *mixed Heap*, which is moſt agreeable to theſe many Particulars after-mentioned. Further, 'tis obſerved by ſome, that the *Seventy* make this Word to ſignify any Loading whatſoever; for they turn an *Hebrew* Word by it, that ſignifies an Aſs-load, *Exod.* xxiii. 5. *If thou ſee the Aſs of him that hateth thee lying under his Burden.* But, after all, there is another Acceptation of *Merchants*, may reconcile all theſe different Readings, if we underſtand by them the *Brokers* of *Babylon*, or theſe who are intruſted to deal in her Affairs, and to put off her Wares to the beſt Advantage. This ſeems to be as natural a Senſe as can be given of it; and ſo allow theſe Merchants to be *Babylon's Factors*, or *Brokers*, that, by her Allowance, diſpenſe her Goods, of which we find ſhe has Plenty; theſe may be juſtly called the *great Men of the Earth*: As all the Officials, from *Cardinals* and downwards, in *Rome*; the greateſt amongſt the *Mahometans* and *Heathen*, even *Kings* themſelves not excepted, who make great Gain by what they give the Name of Religion to. In this Senſe, it is plainly indifferent whether we read *her* or *their*, ſeeing the Goods are *Babylon's* originally, and the Merchants by Truſt and in Commiſſion.

III. We are now to account for the particular Pieces of *Babylon's* Wares, as we have them mentioned *v.* 12. and 13. I think myſelf under no further Obligation to aſcertain the Proprietors of theſe Staple-Commodities; yet all the Incumbrances are not removed, till we know their Nature, which has been a moſt perplexing Piece of Work to the Learned in all Ages: The main Difficulty ariſing from two different Sentiments; Some inclining the whole ſhould be taken literally, while others contend for a myſtical and figurative Meaning: There wants not plauſible Grounds on both Sides, which we are now to examine.

Theſe who ſet up for the literal Senſe, ſay, No doubt this *Babylon* as deſcribed is a moſt *voluptuous* and *luxurious* City: Nor can any Thing be a greater Diſcovery of it, than the Conſumption of theſe Things in great Quantities. And it ſeems unfair to preſs a Paſſage of Scripture into a figurative Senſe, when the literal may be received: Or, if we ſhould, we will lay down a Method to overturn the genuine Senſe of the moſt part of Scripture; and further, that the Proteſtants *allegorizing* Scripture after that Manner, gives a notable Handle to our *Adverſaries*, which may be managed to a dangerous Iſſue againſt us, eſpecially while we condemn in *Papiſts*, what in this Caſe we are as guilty of as they. This is the Strength of the Reaſonings for a literal Senſe, which I ſhall endeavour to remove in theſe few following Conſiderations.

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Conſideration Firſt. Tho' it be yielded that *Antichriſt* or (which is the ſame) *Babylon* has turned out all the ſubſtantial Parts of true Godlineſs, and planted in room thereof a moſt carnal and natural Sett of Principles, by which Means they have prevail'd ſo much upon the Generality of Mankind; Yet I think it would be hard to ſay there is nothing in *Popery*, *Mahometaniſm* or *Heatheniſm*, which favours not of open Licentiouſneſs and *Epicuriſm* (for we ſhould ſpeak Truth even of the Father of Lies) It is moſt certain, that, beſides theſe Things, there is a moſt groſs, and God-provoking Piece of ſpiritual Luxury and Wantonneſs. It muſt be owned, and it can be proven, that *fleſhly* Uncleanneſs is the ordinary Fellow of *ſpiritual* Filthineſs; Yet, it is as true, there may be a ſpiritual Fornication or Idolatry, where fleſhly Filthineſs and all Manner of Intemperance are ſtrictly inhibite, as in the Caſe of the *Magi* before ſpoken of; and in many other Branches of *Antichriſtianiſm*. It has been found, that amongſt the *Heathen* themſelves, there were found Sects, the greateſt Enemies imaginable to all licentious Principles, who yet were never a Whit the better Chriſtians. I hope it is proven, that by *Fornication* we are to underſtand Idolatry.

Conſideration ſecond. The Commodities here mentioned, are no doubt the diſtinguiſhing Characters of *Antichriſt*; for, were they not, then we might hope for a Time when all theſe Things in this World ſhould be uſeleſs: And further, it would prove wherever theſe have been in Requeſt, and uſed, would make a *Sign* of *Antichriſt*. That the latter cannot be received, is certain, elſe the Objection would fall as heavy upon the *Jewiſh Diſpenſation*, as upon *ſpiritual Babylon*; for it is plain, never was more Coſt and Finery even by the Command of God, than was in the *Tabernacle* firſt, and then in the *Temple*; yet I never heard of any that accuſed them therefore: Nor does any alledge that *Antichriſt* is to fall in with the outdated Worſhip of the *Jews* in all its Parts, after God had abrogate the ſame; tho' I am ready to affirm, that many of theſe Things abound among all the three *Branches* of *Babylon*: But this is not that which conſtitutes *Antichriſt*, elſe the *Jews* ſhould make up the Man of Sin, which none ſays, nor indeed can they, tho' they are quite wrong. Again, it is certain, that Chriſtianity, in its ſevereſt Rules, nowhere condemns precious and valuable Ornaments, ſuitable to the Quality of the Perſons: Nor doubt I, when the Kingdom of Chriſt ſhall be in its *Meridian* Splendor, but there will be as much of theſe Things as ſhall be needful to conciliate the *Regard* due to the Characters of her ſeveral Members; for then, tho' the Goſpel by the Efficacy of the Spirit will make Men *good Chriſtians*, yet we may not think it will convert Kings into mere plain Clowns, but will leave them their harmleſs, and, in ſome Caſes, neceſſary *Badges* of Honour. Laſtly, I ſaid, Theſe Things ſeem to be laid down as ſure *Diagnoſticks* of *Antichriſt*, elſe the *Prophet* has loſt his Deſign, which was to point him out to us. Now, if no more than a literal Senſe can be affixed to them, how ſhall we diſtinguiſh betwixt this *myſtical Babylon*, and any other great trading Kingdom, City, or Commonwealth? ſeeing the moſt Part of them deal in all theſe Things: Nor is there any Nation in the World, but uſe them according to their Abilities; and it were hard to ſay, Becauſe God plagued rich *Tyre*, and that *Antichriſt* will reſemble her, that therefore the Riches of *Tyre*, wherever they are found, will point out *Antichriſt*. So that there is no ſmall Inconveniency in admitting a literal Senſe.

Conſideration third. In the Deſcription of this *Babylon*, her firſt Character is, *Myſtery*, Chap. xvii. 5. Now, according to the common Senſe of all the World, a *Myſtery* has ſomething in it beyond what is *literal*, elſe it ſhould ceaſe to be a *Myſtery*; to be ſure an Emblem or Figure muſt differ from the Thing ſignified, and conſequently, by all the Rules of juſt Interpretation, this is not to be taken in a literal Senſe.

Conſideration fourth. This is not the *preſſing* of a plain Text or Portion of Scripture into a *figurative* Senſe, as ſome contend; but it is a plain humouring of the Text, to find out its true Meaning: For we ſhall find Abundance of Texts delivered in a *prophetical* Stile, which, if taken *literally*, would be a manifeſt Injury done the Word of God; as that Paſſage, *Rev.* iii. 17, &c. Beſides, I wiſh theſe learned Gentlemen would conſider what they mean by *Babylon*; And if we ſhould grant, that the City of *Rome* is the Import of it, as the moſt hold, how will they juſtify a *literal Senſe*? For all the World know it is a City as little famous for Trade, as any City of its Bulk in the World, eſpecially ſince it became the *Metropolis* of the *Romiſh* Church. And then, what will they make of this Part of the Prophecy? Nor does it matter what *Papiſts* ſay, as to an *allegorical* Interpretation of this and other Paſſages of Scripture which require ſuch; for that can never juſtify their allegorizing the whole of the Scripture. 'Tis a good Rule in the Indagation of the Word of God, "That if the Letter "of the Text croſs the Analogy of Faith, the common Senſe of Mankind, or the di-"rect Scope and Tendency of the Context, then there is a Neceſſity to quit the literal,

" and follow a figurative Senſe of the Words." All which concur in this Place; and ſo I conclude, we are not to underſtand it *literally*, more than all concerning this *Mother of Harlots*, which none as far as I know ever offered to do.

But when we have in ſome Meaſure got free of the literal Senſe, it will not be eaſy to fix the figurative; for ſome, after *Brightman*, think theſe Commodities are explicative of the Nations whence they come: And ſo every particular Sort of Ware ſignifies the Countries where they grow, at leaſt the People that deal moſt in them; as by *Gold*, &c. they underſtand *Spain*, who fetch theſe Metals from the *Indies*; By *Cinamon*, &c. they mean *Italy*, becauſe theſe Spices grow there; if not, they are by the *Italians* brought from their native Soil. I am ſurprized to ſee a great many pleaſed with this Notion, which I take to be altogether groundleſs; for theſe Things are not to be had at *Rome* (his Interpretation of *Babylon*) nor do theſe Nations where they grow trade to *Rome* with them. Beſides, will we conſider the Senſe of this Interpretation, and (according to him and his Followers) *Spain*, *France*, *England*, &c. are all ſold at *Rome*, but not one Word of the *Chapmen*, further than that they are *Kings*; and ſo this muſt be the ſame in Subſtance with the firſt Mourners, *viz.* Kings. Yet I ſhall readily own the *Pope* has driven a very gainful Trade with all theſe Nations, and many others, and yet does with ſome of them. But this Way of Gloſſing will not ſtand plumb to the Text.

Even when this is turned off alſo, it will not be eaſy to put ſomething in the room thereof leſs exceptionable; tho' to be ſure the Spirit of God has ſomething couched up under theſe Terms; which, that we may have ſome probable Conjectures about, I ſhall premiſe theſe few Things:

Premiſe 1. Theſe ſeveral Pieces of Merchandice are to be underſtood of theſe Things in which *myſtical Babylon* gives out herſelf to vye with the *Church of God*, which Chriſt redeemed with his own Blood; therefore the Church is called a City fenced with Walls, Gates, and Bars, and furniſhed with all Neceſſaries for its Citizens: So *Babylon* gives out herſelf to be full of every Thing that is great and good, having alſo the ſame Deſign in Pretenſion, that the Church has in Reality, to promote and ſure the eternal Salvation of the ſeveral Members thereof. Now this in the true Church is plainly to be meant of *ſpiritual Attainments*, which we find figured by all the fine Things Nature can afford, yet neceſſarily underſtood of the ſpiritual Ornaments of the inward Man, *Pſal.* xlv. 13, &c. *The King's Daughter is all glorious within, her Clothing is of wrought Gold*, &c. That *Babylon* may in her Turn keep Pace with the *Bride*, *the Lamb's Wife*, ſhe alſo has what to the Eye look like the *Ornaments* of the true Church, as we ſee in the two Verſes; and ſo, if they are not real *ſpiritual Decorements*, they are deſigned to look like them.

Premiſe 2. The true Meaning of theſe Pieces of *Merchandice* muſt be what ſtates *Babylon* the Reverſe of the *new Jeruſalem*, which cannot be her Power, Riches, and all other neceſſary Things, or even what is convenient, and for Ornament; for we find the *Church* is not deſtitute of all or any of theſe, as will be evident from the overly Reading of *Chapters* xxi. & xxii. ſtill in typical Expreſſions; where, if there be any Odds, the Church has it to the greateſt Advantage: And I cannot ſee, ſhould we allow a literal Meaning to the *Pride* of *Babylon*, how we can refuſe it to the *Excellency* of the *Church*. That which makes the ſtated Oppoſition betwixt the *betrothed Wife* and the *Whore*, or *Jeruſalem* and *Babylon*, is this, What the Church has, makes her the *Beloved* of her *Lord*; and what the other has, makes her only *admired* in the World.

Premiſe 3. This *Merchandice* is expreſſed in ſuch Terms as do perfectly agree with what *Babylon* gives out concerning them, and what theſe who buy from her take them to be; and not in what agrees to their Nature, which is quite oppoſite to their Names. But theſe who ſell them, give them out for ſuch, as theſe who buy, apprehend them to be what the other advanced about them; yet both are miſtaken, with this Difference, what the People are deceived with, is an *Impoſture* forged by *Babylon*, ſo that ſhe plays the *Knave*, and the World are made *Fools* by her.

There are a great many Pieces of their Traffick in the two Verſes, no leſs than eight and twenty, and of different Natures, and for diverſe Uſes. They are variouſly ranged by the Learned, according to their ſeveral Views: As far as my Apprehenſion about them reaches, we may take them up in theſe ſix ſeveral Claſſes, 1. What are moſt valuable and precious, in the firſt four. 2. What are the fineſt and beſt Ornaments, in the next four. 3 Curious and fine Utenſils about the Houſe for all Uſes, in the next ſix; all theſe, *v.* 12. 4. All grateful Perfumes, in the firſt four of *v.* 13. 5. What is proper for Food and Subſiſtence, in the next ſix. 6. What is neceſſary for Service and Fence, in the laſt four.

From

From which it is very plain wherefore the Spirit of God gave all these the Designation of γόμος or *aggregate Body*, because there are many of them very various in their Natures as well as their Uses, yet all of them exposed to Sale in the great Mart of *Babylon*. A particular Examination of all these we design in Order, tho' the Throng of Expositors pass them lightly over. But in regard something seems to be designed in, and by them, may be of Use to understand the flourishing State of *Antichrist*, as it has been, and yet is; I shall touch at each of them: Yet I will not, nor can I promise to hit the precise Intendment of the Spirit of God in every one of them, but only by a modest Enquiry shew the Ground these Merchants have for their heavy Out-cry. Can any Loss be greater, than when a Society or Multitude of Traders are put quite out of the Way of their Living by the Ruin of their Occupation? Especially as the Case is here, if they be not capable of any other. We see what a horrid Complaint the Silver-Smiths of *Ephesus* made, when under the least Apprehension their inriching Craft was to be useless, and cried down bya new Religion, which made all these Things not only insignificant, but sinful: Which is plainly the Case here; for, cut them once off from this Trade, and their next Portion is to starve, because otherwise they know not how to subsist. But we proceed to consider the Things themselves.

Class 1. is of these Things that are most valuable or precious, and, while they are taken in their natural Sense, do command all other Things thro' the World. Now, to understand the *mystical* Sense of these, we are to take them for what in *Religion* is most *valuable*, and has the greatest Influence upon all its Concerns; And then, apply'd to *Babylon*, will signify what the Whore has in her *false Religion* put in Place of these Things. Nor are we here to stick to the Order, as if the best were always first named, but their Preference is to be fetched from their Nature rather than their Order in the Text. We view them separately.

1. *Gold.* This we read often of in the Old Testament, and especially as used for the *House* and *Utensils* for the Worship of God; which did point out their Purity, Beauty and Worth, and were Figures of these Perfections that should be found afterwards in the *Gospel-Church*: But always where we read of *Gold* about the Tabernacle or the Temple, we find it the Matter of some Ornament or Utensil named at the same Time, as the *Candlestick*, *Spoons*, *Basons*, &c. Yet in this Place we read of no Form this Gold had, and it would not do well to understand it of any of these, seeing we have simply Mention made of Gold, but not of any Vessel determining its Shape. We find also, when Gold is thus absolutely read in Scripture, it is taken for coined or impressed Gold: As, *Gen.* xiii. 2. Abraham *was very rich in Gold*, i. e. such Gold as was called *Money of the Merchant*, and was current; and so, *Rev.* iii. 18. *Buy of me Gold, that thou mayst be rich.* This may from Scripture be presum'd to signify the *Doctrines* of the *Church* when known, *Prov.* xvi. 26. *How much better is it to get Wisdom than Gold?* and, *There is Gold and a Multitude of Rubies, but the Lips of Knowledge are a precious Jewel.* So that, if by Gold in the Church of Christ we may understand the pure and holy Word of God, then in *Babylon* by Gold we must mean their *Directories*, or *Books of Doctrine*, as much esteemed there as the Scriptures are in the true Church.

2. *Silver.* This Metal is less in Value than *Gold*, yet next to it; which in the *Church of Christ*, in a *prophetick* Strain, signifies the *Profession* of the Faith, which in Beauty and Value is next to the Faith itself, *Isa.* i. 22. *How is thy Silver become Dross?* Because they had fallen from the Profession of the Faith, and the Observation of its Rules. The like Sense we have of it, *Song* viii. 9. *If she be a Wall, we will build upon her a Palace of Silver*, i. e. will bless her with the Profession of the Faith in Truth and Sincerity. It is known how much *Antichrist* boasts of her Professors, and their Profession of the Faith.

3. *Precious Stone*: For it is in the *Singular* Number, and not as in our Translation in the *Plural*. This in the true Church must signify *Jesus Christ*, *Isa.* xxviii. 16. *Behold, I lay in* Zion *for a Foundation a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious Corner-stone*, 1 Pet. ii. 6. All the three Parts of *Babylon* pretend to such a precious Corner-stone as this, but none of them have it.

4. *Pearl*, also in the *Singular*. We have Pearls, *Chap.* xxi. 12. *The twelve Gates were of twelve Pearls*; These no doubt signify the Entrance into the State of Salvation: We have it also in one of the Parables, *Matth.* xiii. 45, 46. *The Kingdom of Heaven is like a Merchant-man seeking goodly Pearls; who, when he hath found one of great Price, sold all that he had, and bought it*: This may be understood of Life and Immortality. The *Psalmist* tells, *The Soul's Redemption is precious*; And our Lord says, *What shall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul?* i. e. the Salvation of his Soul, as must necessarily be meant. Now *Antichrist* flatters Men, it is only in his Power to bestow Salvation.

Claſs 2. contains theſe Things that are moſt adorning of the Body; but, being *ſpiritually* underſtood, are applicable to the Soul. They are Four in Number, and point out to us all theſe *Perfections* true Saints attain to on this Side of Heaven, when affirm'd of the *true Church*, and have ſomewhat of *Reſemblance* in *Antichriſt*'s Kingdom, but nothing of *Reality*.

1. *Fine Linen.* That this is a prophetical Expreſſion, is plain from *Rev.* xix. 8. where *fine Linen* is called *the Righteouſneſs of the Saints*; and wherever we read of the Saints, they are ſaid to be clothed in *White*, an Emblem of Purity and Innocence. This is *true* of the Church of Chriſt, and no leſs *pretended to* by *Antichriſt*: For there are Expiations, Pardons, and Luſtrations in *Babylon*; by which they give out they make their Followers as free from all their Sin and Guilt, as if they had never ſinned.

2. *Purple.* This we had before, *Rev.* xvii. 4. where I ſhew'd it was a Badge of Sovereignty and Princely Power, which *Antichriſt* has aſſum'd to himſelf, and would perſwade the World the Kingdoms of the Earth are his, and he may give them to whom he will. That this Colour is the ordinary Garb of *Kings*, is evident from the mock Carriage of the Soldiers to our Lord; for, *John* xix. 2, 3. *They put a Purple Robe on him*, becauſe he was deſigned *the King of the* Jews. This both the *Mahometan Caliphs* and *Romiſh Popes* have pretended to, and made great Sums by theſe Methods, for Inveſtitures and Confirmations.

3. *Silk.* This properly ſignifies a fine Cloth made of a Doun which grows on a low Shrub, and is thought to be a Sort of *Cicory*: It is called *Seris*, and the Cloth made thereof *Sericum*; but afterwards this Word was uſed to ſignify that *Doun* which the *Silk-worm* produceth. It is not uſed in any other Place of the New Teſtament, tho' I make no Doubt the Alluſion in this Place is to that, *Ezek.* xvi. 10. *I covered thee with Silk.* This is mentioned there as the laſt Piece of Attire Chriſt was to adorn his Church with, and was to be the *uppermoſt*: So we are told by Hiſtorians, This *Sericum* was uſually imployed for upper Garments for Women of the greateſt Quality. While our Lord promiſeth this to his Church, it points at his diſtinguiſhing Favours and Mercies: So it is ſaid of *Solomon*'s virtuous Woman, *Prov.* xxxii. 22. *Her Clothing is Silk.* So *Babylon* arrogates to herſelf the Power of diſtinguiſhing Kings and States: But this they are not to expect for nothing.

4. *Scarlet.* Of this before, *Chap.* xvii. 4. where it may point at a State of War, and ſo ſhews the Claim *Babylon* has to the Power of both Peace and War.

Claſs 3. is of Houſe-utenſils, which alſo are to be underſtood figuratively: Nor do they ſeem to be ſo much diſtinguiſhed from their Uſe as their Matter. The Word we render *Veſſels*, might be as well turned *Inſtruments*; for ſo it properly ſignifies, and is indifferently applied to any Tool, either by Sea or Land. It is rendred *the Tackling of a Ship*, Acts xxvii. 19. and is applied to the Perſon of a Man, as *Paul* is called a *choſen Veſſel*, Acts ix. 15. I own the Uncertainty of this general Expreſſion may make the Application of the Particulars leſs ſatisfying; however we glance at them, in Number *Six*.

1. Veſſels of *Thyine Wood.* This Word *Thyine* has perplexed the Learned in all Ages, nor do they know ſo much as what Language it is of: Some take it to be *Greek*, ſome *Hebrew*, others *Arabick*, &c. and ſo, according to their Notions of the Language it belongs to, have different Conceits about it. We nowhere read of it elſe in Scripture, unleſs the Conceit of ſome hold it is the ſame with the *Almug-tree*, 1 *Kings* x. 11, 12. which no doubt was a moſt valuable Wood. It is ſaid by ſome to be *incorruptible*, and ſo fitter for that Uſe *Solomon* made of it; for *it was for Pillars to the Lord's Houſe, and for all Sorts of muſical Inſtruments.* And then the Inſtruments of this Wood will be all theſe Utenſils that make Beauty, Strength, Laſt, and Satisfaction. That this Merchandice is not to be literally taken, I think this an impregnable Argument; for then the World had not been a Stranger to this Wood, ſeeing ſo much might been got at *Rome.* The myſtical Meaning of this I take to be all theſe curious and intertaining Shows ſo frequent in *Babylon*, viz. their Jubilees, Proceſſions, Games and other *Opera's* to be frequently met with wherever Idolatry prevails, together with their beloved Inſtrumental Muſick.

2. All Manner Veſſels of *Ivory.* There are not a few Difficulties about this *Matter* theſe *Veſſels* or Inſtruments are made of, becauſe the Learned differ about the Thing. Some ſay, It is only it is only meant of *Elephants Teeth*, which is what we properly mean by *Ivory*; but then this, tho' very curious and fit for indenting and making ſmall Things of, yet is not capable of reſiſting much Force, nor does it laſt long without being tarniſhed. It is true, they might be renewed; and ſome tell, The *Heathen* made their Pocket and Chamber-deities of this Matter, becauſe very ſuſceptible of the Ingraver's Art. It

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is alſo proven out of Authors of no ſmall Credit, that this Word is no more but a metaphorical Expreſſion; and that when a Thing is deſign'd *Eburneous*, or of *Ivory*, the Meaning is, it is like it in Whiteneſs and Smoothneſs, *&c.* An Expreſſion to this Purpoſe we have, *Song* vii. 4. *Thy Neck is as a Tower of Ivory*, i. e. it looks like it, for that was reckon'd a great Point of Beauty, that the Neck ſhould be long and tapering from the Shoulders to the Jaws; and that it is called *a Tower of Ivory*, is to point out the Whiteneſe and Smoothneſs of it. But *Pliny* (an Author I conſeſs of no great Reputation) tells us of a Tree of extraordinary Whiteneſs and Hardneſs, which was therefore called *Elephantinus*, and that of this Wood they made very curious Things. Here ſome ſay he may ſpeak freely, becauſe the Authors he mentions are all periſhed: Yet, however little Credit may be given this Author in other Things, I cannot think him ſo far out of it here, in regard we read in Scripture, 1 *Kings* x. 18. that *Solomon made a Throne of Ivory*, and it is called *a great Throne, which he overlaid with Gold.* It cannot be refuſed but Wood is more proper that Bone for that Work: And if we conſider the Dimenſions of that Throne, it would ſtagger one's Faith to believe ſuch prodigious Teeth of theſe Animals could be had. We read alſo of *Ivory Beds*, Amos vi. 4. and of *Ivory Houſes*, Amos iii. 15. And therefore I am of Opinion, that *Elephantinus* was rather a *ſolid* and *white*, tho' a *rare Wood*, than what we call *Ivory*. And in the *Weſt-Indies*, particularly in *Darien*, we read of a very fine and firm white Wood, uſed for the moſt excellent Purpoſes, *Atlas Geogr.* Vol. V. Pag. 429. However we can hardly determine which of theſe are meant here, eſpecially that in *ſpirituat Babylon* there is much Uſe made of true Bone or Ivory for their *Amulets*, *little Images*, and *Roſiaries*, which, when conſecrate after their Manner, bring them much Gain: Nor can we at this Diſtance know what other Uſes might be made of that Wood, than that of Beds, Thrones, Palaces, *&c.* However, in the general, this ſeems to point at the Tools of Idolatry, ſuch as are named, and are known to abound wherever *Antichriſt*'s Power obtains.

3. All Manner Veſſels of *moſt precious Wood.* I ſee not how by this *precious Wood* we can mean any particular Kind of Wood, ſeeing I nowhere find this Deſignation appropriate to any particular Sort of Trees; and therefore we muſt regard it as a General, containing all not comprehended in the other two, and then it will take in *Cedar*, *Cyprus*, *Ewe*, *Salvin*, &c. which are Trees of greateſt Value, and abounded moſt in theſe Countries, where they were ſpecially uſeful upon all Occaſions, their Wood being not only beautiful, but durable. But whether this is to be underſtood of Perſons, whom we find ſometimes prophetically repreſented by Trees, or of other Utenſils of their Idolatry, I ſhall not venture to determine, tho' the laſt bids faireſt for Truth.

4. All Manner Veſſels *of Braſs.* That the Braſs of old called χαλκος, was not the ſame with ours, is very plain from what is ſaid, *Chap.* i. 15. but was a moſt valuable Metal, and next to Silver, if not equal with it; and ſome ſay it was preferable. We find it was much uſed in the Temple, for the *Altar*, *Pillars*, *Sea*, &c. It was alſo uſed for Fetters, becauſe of its Strength: Inſtruments of Muſick and Warlike Engines were alſo made of this Metal, and likewiſe Mirrors. Some think the firſt Bells were made of it, and a great many other Things: So that we are here to mean by it all thoſe Inſtruments it was capable to be form'd into. No doubt this reſpects their apeing the Temple in its Utenſils, which they endeavour'd to have in as good Order in their idolatrous Way, as God had ordered in the true Worſhip, but without any Spirituality; and therefore this may reſpect her ſenſleſs Scheme of Ceremonial Worſhip, without either Life or Warrant.

5. All Manner Veſſels *of Iron.* This is the coarſeſt and hardeſt of Metals, yet of the moſt common uſe: Of it are made the moſt of the Inſtruments of War, both for Offence and Defence. We find many Uſes for it in Scripture, as for *Mechanick-Tools*, *Weapons*, *Gates*, *Pillars*, &c. but, as far as I can find, they made no Uſe of it about the Sanctuary; probably becauſe God would have that a Place of Peace, at leaſt not to be defended by ſuch coarſe Inſtruments as are commonly made of this Metal. It is true, *David* did provide of this Metal, 1 *Chron.* xxix. 2. And ſo this plainly ſays, *Babylon* was to ſupport herſelf by other Manner of Means than God had indulged his Church; for moſt of the Inſtruments of Death are of this Metal.

6. All Manner Veſſels of *Marble.* This is the only Text in the *New Teſtament* where we read of *Marble*, and ſeldom we have it in the *Old*: Only it would appear to be one of the coarſeſt, yet neceſſary, Materials for building of the Houſe of God; and therefore *David* brings it in in the laſt Place, without Tale further than to ſay, *Marble in Abundance*, 1 Chron. xxix. 29. It is famous, eſpecially in theſe Countries, for its Whiteneſs, whence it has its Name; for tho' we value *variegated Marble*, yet there the whiter the better: And truly, according to the Force of the *Greek* Word, a black Marble is the ſame as a *black Swan* with us; for they called it μαρμαρος, which proper-

ly ſignifies *White*. It was and is juſtly regarded for its Firmneſs and Strength: Thus Chriſt's Legs are ſaid to be like Marble, *Song* v. 15. *His Legs are as Pillars of Marble*. This points at the Stability *Babylon* reckoned to be in her Foundation, tho' all in the mean Time conſiſted only in her own Imagination.

Claſs 4. conſiſts of grateful and excellent *Perfumes*. That theſe were in Uſe under the *Temple-ſervice*, and typical of the grateful *Savour* of the Saints *Devotion*, did appear above: That theſe point at them by *Pretenſion*, will caſt up now, when we conſider them particularly, in Number four.

1. *Cinamon*, This is univerſally known among us by the Name *Cannel*; yet it is diſputed whether it be the *Caſſia* ſo often mentioned in the Old Teſtament, of which the *Anointing Oil* was made, *Exod.* xxx. 34. or if it be more or leſs aromatick than it. Some tell us, They are both one, and differ only as to the outward or inward Situation on the Tree whence they fetch it. Its Uſe is well known in *Medicine*: And as for its Deſign in the Worſhip of God, it is plain from what we have ſaid, if we add thereto that of the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* xlv. 8. *All thy Garments ſmell of Caſſia*. So that it is one of the moſt ſavoury *Spices* in the *Eaſt Indies*, and was uſed to point out the *Acceptableneſs* of Believers Performances through a *Mediator*. It is of a moſt penetrating Nature, and cannot be concealed. It ſeems plainly to differ from *Caſſia*, becauſe they are both mentioned in the ſame Compoſition of the *Anointing Oil*, Exod. xxx. 23. and Half of the Quantity of the *Cinamon*, is made equivalent to twice as much of the *Caſſia*. This *Babylon* vindicates to herſelf, while ſhe makes all *Hereticks* and *Infidels* who are out of her Communion, moſt unacceptable to God.

2. *Odours*. The ſame Word is uſed to expreſs *Zacharias*'s Service in the Temple, *Luke* i. 10. *He offered Incenſe*; this was to be performed daily, Morning and Evening. It was a Compoſition, the *Formula* whereof we have ordered, *Exod.* xxx. 34. and was a plain Figure of the Interceſſion of Chriſt, of which before, *Rev.* viii. 3. *Much Incenſe was given unto him*, whereby the Prayers of the Saints were carried to Heaven. Theſe *Odours*, Rev. v. 8. are called the Prayers of the Saints: So *David*, beſeeching God about his own Prayers, ſays, *Pſal.* cxli. 2. *Let my Prayers be ſet forth before thee as Incenſe*. In *Babylon*, tho' they have not the true Incenſe, yet ſhe flatters the World that Saints and Angels interceed for them; yet this they will not impart, till they be well paid therefore: Which is a great Diſparagement to the *Merits* and *Interceſſion* of Chriſt.

3. *Ointment*. This no doubt alludes to *the holy Anointing Oil*, Exod. xxx. 23. with which all the Veſſels of the *Houſe* were to be *conſecrate*; which plainly repreſents the ſuperſtitious Work of *Papiſts*, *Mahometans*, and *Heathen*, in their ſeveral Conſecrations of *Houſes*, *Altars*, &c. for theſe are Parts of *Antichriſt*'s *Livery*, wherever they are found; and tho' thereby they think they copy after the *Old*, yet they croſs the whole Scope of the *New Teſtament*.

4. *Frankincenſe*. This is both the Name of the Tree, and its Production, λίβανος, which comes from the *Hebrew*, and ſignfies *white*, becauſe of the Colour of the *Wood* and *Gum*. It is noted for one of the ſtrongeſt *Aromaticks*, which is able to cleanſe the thickeſt Air, and ſuppreſſeth the moſt diſagreeable Scent. It was much uſed under the *Law*, and the conſtant Companion of the *Meat-offering*, Lev. ii. 1. It was a notable Emblem of the *Merits* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which ſuppreſſeth all unſavoury Stems ariſing from our Guilt, and makes both our Perſons and Performances acceptable to the Father. Thus *Babylon* decoys the World, and makes them believe it is in her Power to diſpoſe of all the Vertue and Efficacy thereof, and deludes poor unthinking Souls to their own Ruin and Undoing.

Claſs 5. contains proper and comfortable *Food*. All the reſt being in a Figurative Senſe, this cannot miſs to follow them, and ſo it is not to be meant of *corporal*, but *ſpiritual Food*, which follows in theſe *ſix*;

1. *Wine*. This was uſed in moſt *Sacrifices*: It was of old a Type of the Blood of Chriſt, as now, by the ſame Appointment, it is become a Memorial thereof. Before we heard of the *Wine* of the *Whore*; here we ſee, however poiſonable and intoxicating it is, ſhe uſeth it in Imitation of the Sanctuary-ſervice, but free of the *Truth* thereof under the *Goſpel*.

2. *Oil*. This is meant of the *Oil of Olives*. There are many Sorts of Oil, but this is both the moſt *common* and moſt *uſeful*: It was always joined with *Wine* in the Offerings. Whether this has an Eye to the *Popiſh* and *Mahometan* Uſe of Oil, I ſhall not ſay; but it ſeems to look that Way. We heard of it before at Length, on *Chap.* vi. 6.

3. *Fine Flour*. This went along with *Wine* and *Oil*, and compleated the *Meat-offering*. It was a Figure of Jeſus Chriſt, the true Bread of Life, as he was to be bruiſed for the Sins of an Elect World: And ſo the Bread in the Supper is continued

to

to be a *Pillar of Remembrance* of him. *Babylon* then pretends to every Thing really in the true Church.

4. *Wheat*; which we find an Emblem of *real Believers* in Chriſt's holy Word, *Mat.* iii. 12. *He will gather the Wheat into his Garner.* And, *Song* vii. 2. *Thy Belly is like an Heap of Wheat ſet about with Lilies.* It alſo points at the fine and uncommon Food Chriſt ſubſiſts his People with; and ſo does *Babylon* value herſelf upon her Spawn and their Subſiſtence.

5. *Beaſts*, or, as it ſhould be rendered, *Bullocks*; which were the chief and *principal Sacrifices* on all ſolemn Occaſions, and their great Fare at their *extraordinary* Entertainments.

6. *Sheep*, which ſignifies all taken from the *Flock*, and were the ordinary Sacrifices; for God was to be ſerved daily by the Oblation of ſuch. Hereby *Babylon* gives out herſelf as that only Church where the true Subjects of God's Worſhip are to be had, and that God will not be pleaſed with any other *Offering* than what ſhe makes; that all other Worſhip is like *wild Fire*, both unacceptable to God, and unprofitable for the Offerer.

Claſs 6. contains what is neceſſary for *Service* and *Protection*; where *Babylon*, in her Opinion, and in the Judgment of others, wants neither for unreaſonable nor reaſonable *Auxiliaries*, and theſe are *four*.

1. *Horſes.* That there is a Change of the *Conſtruction* in this and the two next Words, has given an Handle of much Contention, is certain; tho' I think the whole Matter may be eaſily compoſed, by either underſtanding the *Noun* πλῆθος, *Multitude*, or by repeating the commanding Word, γόμον, *Merchandice*; either of which will govern the *Genitive* of the *plural Number*, and then all is right again. As for the *Horſes*, they ſeem plainly to be meant of Horſes ſerviceable for War, and ſo their *Riders* are comprehended, *Cavalry* being the Flower of an Army; and will alſo ſuppoſe an *Infantry*, both which make up a compleat Army: Where it would appear, *Babylon* is debating the Matter with the true Church, and ſets up upon a Level with her, yea, above her, being able and ready to defend and protect her Members; For it is one of the great Excellencies of Chriſt's Church, that ſhe *is like an Army with Banners*, Song vi. 4.

2. *Chariots.* This is not a *Greek* Word in the Original, nor are Expoſitors agreed what Language it is, tho' all tranſlate ῥεδη, *Chariot*: But then they fall out whether it was uſed in *Peace* or *War*; for there is a great Difference betwixt theſe *Chariots* that for Peace were curiouſly wrought, and but ſlender; whereas the other were intirely for Terror and Execution, and therefore were ſtrong and coarſe. I ſee no Occaſion to diſpute about this Matter, for we are ſure the ſame Name has been beſtowed upon both. In War, *Babylon*'s Citizens are provided for *Defence* or *Offence*, as Exigents fall out; and in Peace, for *Pleaſure* and *Eaſe*. Tho' indeed what I take to be the chief Intendment thereof, is ſtill to vie with the *Church of God*, whoſe Protection is ſaid to be *Twenty thouſand Chariots*, Pſal. lxviii. 17. ſo *Babylon* is not deſtitute of theſe for a Shield unto her Followers.

3. *Slaves*, originally *Bodies*, as in the Margin of the Bible. Some, by Authority from *Druſius*, *Pollux*, &c. contend, That by the Bodies of Men are to be meant Slaves, becauſe the Souls are not capable of Bondage. This is a Notion *Grotius* and *Hamond* are fond of; yet one would think they ſhould have conſidered the Text, whether Slaves be in it or not. That there is mention of both *Souls* and *Bodies* of Men, will not plead it; but if we go back to the *Greek*, σωμάτων in the *Genitive*, and ψυχὰς will never connect together; for the firſt is in the ſame *Caſe* of *Declenſion* with *Horſes* and *Chariots*, and the next in the ſame *Caſe* with the *four* in the Beginning of the Verſe; ſo that here they make a great *Solyciſm* in the *Language*. That we may come to the Senſe of this, we are to call in the Aſſiſtance of one of theſe two Words before-mentioned, *viz. Multitude* or *Merchandice*, and ſo it will read a *Multitude* or *Merchandice* of Bodies. I have proven all the reſt are to be taken *figuratively*, and conſequently this, and then there will be no Room for their Gloſs. Nor will the Alluſion to the Prophet, who, ſpeaking of *Tyre*, tells, *Ezek.* xxvii. 13. *Their Merchants did trade in the Perſons* [originally, Souls] *of Men*; becauſe there mention is only made of Souls, but here of both Bodies and Souls, tho' with the Variation of the *Conſtruction*. Nor can I paſs the Argument of a late Writer, who thinks the Variation of the *Conſtruction* proves the Thing ſpoken of to be the ſame; for I think it demonſtrates the contrary. What Reaſon can be offered why the Caſe ſhould be altered, when the Words are ſo near, if not to difference betwixt them? Now we are to conſider what Bodies *Antichriſt* promiſes greateſt *Service* and *Aſſiſtance* from, and theſe will not be found to be *Slaves*, but Corps or dead Bodies, and the Fragments thereof,

whichthey ſell at the greateſt Rate. Nor is this peculiar to *Popery*, for that borrowed it from the *Heathen*, and the *Mahometans* had it from both. That this is a very ordinary Signification of *Body*, is evident from Scripture, *Luke* xvii. 37. *Whereſoever the Body is, thither will the Eagles be gathered together.* So the Diſciples of *John* are ſaid *to take up his* Body *after* Herod *had cut off his Head*, Matth. xiv. 12. And in Abundance of other Places, we may find it in that ſame Senſe. Nor do I know, but this may point at the ridiculous Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation*, by which the Papiſts give out, that a Crumb of Bread is turned into the real Body of Chriſt. The World alſo knows how this anſwers to the *dead* Body of the great Prophet *Mahomet*, the Ground-wall of all their Gain.

4. *Souls of Men.* This, in my humble Opinion, cannot be better interpreted than of the *tutelary Saints*, in Uſe amongſt the *Papiſts* and *Mahometans*, and the *tutelary gods* among the *Heathen*, which, by all of them, are had in great Eſteem, and the Cauſe of much Gain. As for the common Opinion of the ſelling of Souls out of Purgatory, we may allow it to paſs alſo; but the other ſeems to bid faireſt for the Senſe of this, if we have been ſo happy as hit the reſt.

14 And the Fruits that thy Soul luſted after, are departed from thee, and all Things which were dainty and goodly, are departed from thee, and thou ſhalt find them no more at all.

15 The Merchants of theſe Things which were made rich by her, ſhall ſtand afar off for the Fear of her Torment, weeping and wailing,

16 And ſaying, Alas, alas! that great City, that was clothed in fine Linen, and Purple, and Scarlet, and decked with Gold, and precious Stones, and Pearls:

17 For in one Hour ſo great Riches is come to Nought.——

Before I conſider the Lamentation of the Importers, I would premiſe theſe Things;

1. It may be enquired, Who ſpoke to *Babylon*? Some ſay, This is a Voice reproaching *Babylon*: But what follows will not allow this, for they *weep* and *wail*, which Reproachers will not do. It would be remembred, *a Voice from Heaven* has been ſpeaking ſince *v.* 4. where he directs his Diſcourſe to his own *People*, and foretells the State of *Babylon*, with the *Lamentation* will be made for her, by ſeveral Sorts of Perſons: *Some* whereof he repreſents, as ſpeaking to *Babylon*, as the *Kings*, v. 10. and theſe in this Paſſage: Others are brought in ſpeaking of her in the *third Perſon*, as the firſt Sett of *Merchants*, and the *Mariners* afterwards; the Alteration of the Perſon is of Uſe to diſtinguiſh the *Mourners*: Beſides, 'tis known, that inordinate Grief will ſet Perſons a raving, and ſome will vent themſelves one Way, and ſome another, and ſpeak to the abſent as preſent; ſo that here this Voice is perſonating theſe Perſons.

2. There is ſome Difficulty about the Connexion of this Paſſage, if it be of a Piece with what is contain'd in the preceeding Verſes; or, if what is ſaid here be only a *Recapitulation* in general, of Things before delivered by Detail, *v.* 12. & 13. I noticed before, what Obligation lies upon us to adhere ſtrictly to the Words of the Text, in order to attain its Meaning: If we do it here, we ſhall eaſily be free of this Doubt; for the ſix Sorts of Merchandice before mentioned, are expreſly called her *Merchandice*, *i. e.* the Merchandice of *Babylon*; whereas the Things here named are deſigned from the *Merchants*, v. 15. and not from *Babylon*: Yea, they are Goods ſhe purchaſed; and therefore this is a new Purpoſe, and both Perſons and Things differ from what we had before.

3. Some contend for a Tranſpoſition of *v.* 14. and inſert it betwixt *v* 23. and 24. of this Chapter, and read the 15 *v.* immediately after the 13. But this is a moſt unpardonable Freedom with Scripture; and, if we thus turn the Word of God upſide-down, we might make it to avouch the ſtrangeſt Thoughts can enter into a Man's Head. Thus to treat the *Difficulties* of Scripture, deſigned to exerciſe our *Diligence*, and diſcover our *Ignorance*, is to do by it as *Alexander* did with the *Gordeon* Knot, to cut, but not looſe it. Yet I cannot think the Difficulties here ſo great as drive to ſuch an unjuſtifiable Shift; for, as in the firſt Sort of *Merchandice* we had the Venders mentioned before their Goods, ſo here we have the Goods firſt mentioned, and then the Merchants; that is all the Odds, which ſeems to be a very beautiful Variation, and may be found in other Writings.

In this Paſſage, therefore, I ſhall notice, 1. The Cauſe of Lamentation for *Babylon*. 2. The Mourners. 3. Their Lamentation, and its Aggravations.

I. The

I. The Cauſe of this *Mourning*. One would think, all this is for *Babylon*'s Sake; but we find the Throng of their Concern was for *themſelves*: This they will conceal, but God has revealed it. They are much afflicted for *Babylon*'s Loſs, which we have *v.* 14. where are, 1. Mentioned the Things ſhe had loſt. And, 2. The Nature of this Loſs.

1. The Things themſelves, in three very comprehenſive Generals;

(1.) *The Fruits that thy Soul luſted after.* The Word rendred *Fruit*, ὀπωρα, properly ſignifies *Harveſt*, from οπος *ſuccus*, and ὡρα, *tempus*; becauſe in Harveſt, Fruit of all Kinds, that grow on *Trees*, are moſt juicy, and eſpecially the Fruit of the Vines. According to others, it is an *Hebraiſm*, and ſignifies the *Seaſon*, and turn it, the *Seaſons when thy Deſires were ſatisfied, are gone*: Both of theſe ſeem to look the ſame Way, for both of them ſignify a gaining Time. This Seaſon is deſigned from *Babylon*'s ſometime Delight and Satisfaction therewith, *that thy Soul luſted after*, or *of the Deſire of thy Soul*; ſo that this was a Time of Enjoyment, and went moſt glibly down with her. Now *Babylon* is repreſented by a *Whoriſh Woman*, and a covetous Harlot, which repreſented her Idolatry, and her Gain by it; and ſo we need not be at a Loſs to find Plenty of theſe Seaſons, wherein ſhe enriches herſelf by the Spoils of the World, as their *Jubilees*, *Feaſts*, *Faſts*, *Shrines*, *Moſchs*, *Temples*, *Images*, *Indulgences*, *Pardons*, &c.

(2.) *All Things that are dainty.* This Word λιπαρὰ ſignifies properly *fat Things*, and is taken for the beſt and moſt palatable of Victuals, which *Babylon* indulgeth herſelf in, and had in Return of all her pretended Religion. Whatever they give out of the *Auſterity* of their Lives, and *Severity* of their Rules there are none in the World greater Indulgers of Appetite than Idolaters of all Sorts; and therefore we find *Uncleanneſs*, which is the Child of *Intemperance*, always abound amongſt them.

(3.) *All Things which were goodly*, λαμπρὰ, *ſplendid*, or fine and gorgeous. It is properly an Adjunct of Clothing, *Acts* x. 30. *A Man ſtood before me in bright Clothing*. This is another Piece of *Antichriſt's* Luxury, wherein in all Things they vie with Kings, and the greateſt Men in the Earth, ſo great is their *Mortification*.

Theſe Things are a moſt lively Repreſentation of the Returns *Babylon* makes of all her religious Bables, which bring her more true and ſolid worldly *Wealth*, than the *Pains* of the moſt laborous, or the Valour and Succeſs of the moſt warlick Nations under the Sun; and ſo it is no Wonder they are at ſo great Pains to ſupport that *Diana* by which they get ſo much Wealth, and that at ſo eaſy a Rate.

2. The Nature of *Babylon*'s Loſs by the Want of theſe Things, expreſſed in two Clauſes; The firſt doubled, to ſhew the Greatneſs and Univerſality of this Loſs, 1. *They are departed from thee*; theſe Wells were run dry. It was in ſome Meaſure ſo at the *Reformation*, when, with a Rap, *Rome* loſt ſo many Nations and Principalities, which before yielded a great annual Income to it: And it has been ſo with the *Mahometans* for ſome Ages, whole Provinces, both in *Europe* and *Aſia*, having fallen off from that Deluſion; but when the Time of the utter Extirpation comes, the Deficiency will be total, and then will *Babylon* be as low as ever ſhe was high. 2. *She ſhall find them no more at all.* This tells the great Pains ſhe will be at to recover what ſhe had loſt, and had ſo much Satisfaction in, but all will be in vain.

There is here a triple *Denial* or Negation, which we can hardly with Advantage expreſs in our Language, and ſeems to point out all theſe Things will make her Friends bewail her Caſe, 1. There will be no Subject out of which ſhe can be ſupplied; for the proper Dominions belonging to the *Popiſh* and *Mahometan* Powers will be overthrown, that they can reap nothing of them. *Peter's Patrimony*, as the *Pope*'s *Dominions* are called, will ſuffer much by the Plagues of God. As for their tributary Kingdoms, either they will make Defection from them, or elſe will be in the like miſerable Condition with *Babylon* herſelf. 2. Force and Strength will fail her; ſhe will want of that Power whereby ſhe made herſelf terrible to the *Kings* of the Earth. It is very much ſo with the *Mahometans* already; for, whereas they uſed to bring vaſt Armies to the Field, conſiſting of many Hundred thouſands of Men, now it is much if they can levy One hundred thouſand. The *Pope* is in no better Condition, and the Heathen Powers are yet more feeble. 3. Any Endeavour they ſhall uſe, will want Succeſs: They will ſtrive in vain to better their Condition, as all do who have God againſt them.

It would be obſerved, how well this connects with the Lamentation of the former Merchants, *v.* 11, 12. *No Man buyeth Antichriſt's Merchandice any more*; And ſo of Courſe, he will be deſtitute of all he had in Return therefore, and which brought him ſo much Satisfaction. The two then will come on her in one Day, a general Contempt of her Goods, and her total Want of what ſhe had by them.

II. The Mourners deſcribed by two Characters, *v.* 15.

1. They *are Merchants of theſe Things*, i. e. theſe above-mentioned: I own, it is hard to tell, whether by theſe Merchants we are to underſtand the Sellers and Venders of theſe Commodities, *i. e.* theſe Sort of Employments that live by the *Luxury* of *Babylon*, as no doubt great many may do, who furniſh their Courts with theſe Things.

Historians tell us, That a good Number of Merchants of the greatest Note drive no other Business but do furnish *Rome*, and that several great *Marts* in the Bottom of the *Streights* ransack both Sides of the World, to supply the *Ottoman Court*, and are vastly rich by this Trade. Now, if but in two Places so many thrive so well by furnishing the Fewel of Luxury, what a vast Amount would it be, if we were to notice the other Courts in the World that belong to Antichrist? what Consumpt would be made, and what a vast Return of Money? At that Time all their Hopes will fail them, and these Goods of theirs will then in a great Measure ly upon their Hand. Or, if by these Merchants we understand the *Caterers* and Providitors of all these Things, who also enrich themselves by the Gain; Any of these will answer the Scope, tho' I think the first most agreable thereto.

2. They *are made rich by her*, i. e. by *Babylon*. She was inriched in Money by her Merchandice; that Money she disposed of to others, who alimented her Voluptuousness. Which ever of these Sorts of Merchants we mean, they are certainly a Sett of Men that had no other Way of living but only by their catering for her; and this will hold, especially if by the Harvest of *Babylon*'s Desire, we should understand fleshly Lust among other Things, which abounds to the greatest Pitch among both *Mahometans* and *Papists*, as well as among *Heathen*; the gratifying of these Lusts, whether natural or unnatural, has raised the Stocks of a great many.

Object. Then all these Things concerning these second Merchants are to be taken in a most plain and literal Sense, contrary to the Pleadings at the Beginning of this Amplification; and what Reason can be given, why the first, as well as the second Sort of Merchandice, may not pass in a literal Sense? I answer, The first Sort of Merchandice is what *Babylon* gives out herself to be Mistress of, and pretends they can be had nowhere else; and these are in such Expressions as are used to represent the Riches of Grace, as before proven: Whereas, if we should take them literally, we will find it false in Fact; for, understand by *Babylon* what we will, it shall not be found a Mart for these eight and twenty Commodities above-mentioned. Besides, these three Sorts of *Merchandice*, v. 14. are in such Expressions as nowhere in Scripture signify any Thing of Religion. And finally, I restricted the figurative Meaning to that which *Babylon* has monopolized to herself, and did not extend it to what can be had any where else.

III. The Affections of *Babylon*'s Providitors, and the Aggravations.

1. The affecting Lamentation of the Merchants, in these Steps; 1. A stunning and disputing Fear, which made them *stand afar off*. Unexpected Disasters always produce this in Friends, and stupify them at the first; *curæ magnæ stupent*. So it was with the *Kings*, v. 10. and for the same Reason, *for Fear of her Torment*. 2. *Their Weeping and Wailing*, of which see on *v.* 9, and 11. 3. Their Cry, *Alas, alas!* of which on *v.* 10.

2. The Aggrava ions of this Mourning, 1. From the former State of that great *City* before her Fall, *That great City, that was clothed*, &c. No Fall is so astonishing, as from the full Tide of Prosperity to the lowest Ebb of Adversity, and such will the Ruin of *Babylon* be; of this on *v.* 12. There is only this Difference, there it is one of her Commodities, here it is one of her Ornaments: But in this Sense also we had it, *Chap.* xvii. 4. and I shewed it was only *Gilding*; so that, hence these Merchants (be who they will) are to be convinced all is not Gold that glisters. 2. From the Suddenness of the Blow, *v.* 17. *For in one Hour so great Riches is come to Nought*; of this we see before on *v.* 10. except the Verb *come to Nought*, which properly signifies *to be deserted*, i. e. *none cared for them*, or sought after them; their Price will fall, and so will *Babylon*'s *Pomp*.

17 — And every Ship-master, and all the Company in Ships, and Sailers, and as many as trade by Sea, stood afar off,

18 And cried, when they saw the Smoke of her Burning, saying, What City is like unto this great City?

19 And they cast Dust upon their Heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great City! wherein were made rich, all that had Ships in the Sea, by Reason of her Costliness; for in one Hour is she made desolate.

This is the last Sett of *Mourners* upon the Fall of *Babylon*, and may well be allowed to comprehend all omitted in the other two. They come under the general Character of

of *Mariners* ; about the Signification of which there is no ſmall Stir. Some who are averſe to *Allegories* and *Figures*, would have it to paſs in the moſt known and literal Notion thereof: But, however eaſy this be at the Time, when they come to the Application, they know not what to make of it ; For, 1. Taking it *literally*, tho' *Babylon* were deſtroyed, this will not ſay there ſhall be no further Uſe for *Shipping* and *Sailers* ; which however, to humour the Text, is plainly implied. But, 2. Whatever theſe *Mariners* are, they wholly depend upon *Babylon*, and that, as ſoon as ſhe falls, there is no further Uſe for them ; and ſo it is ſaid, *Every Ship-maſter, and all the Company in Ships*, v. 17. and yet as comprehenſive, *v.* 19. *All that had Ships in the Sea.* All which, when taken literally, contains two notable Falſhoods, *That* Babylon *has all Maritime Affairs under her Power and Authority* ; And again, *That all of them have their Subſiſtence and Maintenance in her Service.* Nor will it help them to ſay, The Denomination is taken from the greater Part ; for that is as falſe as either, particularly as to *Rome* (whom theſe Authors make to be all in *Babylon*) for there are more Ships belong to *Reformed Governments*, than to the *Pope*, yea, and all *Papiſts*. 3. Theſe ſame learned Men are not for taking Ships in a literal Senſe, *Chap.* viii. 9. where we have the Effect of the ſecond Trumpet ; where by the *Sea* ſome mean the *Earth*, others the *Church*, and ſome *Antichriſt* ; and by the *Ships* underſtand *Cities*, or leſſer Towns, or Societies of an inferior Order. Now it might be enquired, If it be *emblematical* under the *Trumpets*, what ſhould make it *literal* in the *Vials* ? For, if we thus vary in theſe Figures, we may well give our own Conceits, but not the Senſe of the Text, which to be ſure will be found all of a Piece, where nothing occurs that directs us another Way.

Having now, and I think reaſonably, rejected the literal Senſe of this *Sett* of Mourners ; That we may come to ſome probable Conjecture about them, we ſhall conſider what is peculiar to *Ships* and their *Crews*, and then ſee *what* in *Babylon* may be found to correſpond thereto. This we offer in theſe few, 1. Ships are the ordinary Reſidence of ſmall Societies, under one chief Ruler or Governor, called *Maſter of the Ship* ; and for ordinary every one of them are independent of another. 2. Theſe *Crews* do belong to ſome from whom they have both their Maintenance and Orders ; for they have all Owners either of Ship or Cargo. 3. Their whole Buſineſs is for Gain and Advantage (for here the Speech is of Trade, not of War-Ships) out of which they have no ſmall Share to themſelves. 4. They are to run all Riſques and Hazards for the Sake of their Maſters. 5. They are to carry no other Cargo but what their Maſters are pleaſed to load them with. 6. In theſe Ships there are ſeveral Orders or Setts of Men, and each of them have their proper Task.

If all theſe Things be conſidered, I do not think it will be any difficult Matter to find in *Babylon* what will exactly anſwer all theſe Steps in the Emblem, which may be well and patly applied to the ſeveral Sorts of *Regulars* among the *Papiſts*, and have Deſignations of the ſame Import amongſt the *Mahometans* ; and ſo by them we are to mean *their Colleges, Seminaries, Monaſtries, Nunneries*, &c. and the like Societies in the *Mahometan* Countries, called *Seraglios, Colleges*, &c. which we ſhall view a little in their Analogy with the Crews of Ships. 1. They are all of them under the Management of the *Head of their Order*, who is ſtill to have his Reſidence at *Rome* among the *Papiſts*, and wherever the Court or Porte is among the *Mahometan* Kingdoms ; and, according to Directions received from theſe ſeveral Heads, they are to behave. 2. Each of theſe Convents have their particular Rules, to which they are to conform themſelves, at the Sight of the ſeveral reſiding *Priors, Abbots*, &c. 3. All of them belong to one Maſter, and to him they muſt account, as well as drudge for his Advantage : And ſo the *Popes* make no ſmall Gain of theſe Ships ; it is the ſame Way with the *Mahometans*. 4. Theſe have no ſmall Share of the Gain, which they employ no leſs for the Gratification of their Luſts, than their Maſters do the reſt for their own. 5. They are to run all Hazards and Dangers, at the Will of their Commanders : So ſome among the Papiſts are *Itinerants*, and muſt trudge about ; their Work is to be Spies upon others more fixed : Some of them are Mendicants, and live upon the People, and get ſure ſure Knowledge of all they do: Others are *Miſſionaries*, and ſent to both Ends of the World, where they have Abundance of Difficulties to engage. 6. Theſe have no other Buſineſs but this, and, when caſt out of it, are juſt good for nothing.

So much being premiſed, we will need to ſay but little upon the Words ; in which I ſhall ſhortly notice, 1. The ſeveral Ranks amongſt this Sort of Mourners. 2. The Ground of their Sorrow. 3. The Diſcoveries of their Grief.

1. We are to view their ſeveral Orders ; as, 1. *Every Ship-maſter*, or Ruler, or Governor. It is uſed alſo to expreſs the *Maſter of a Ship*, the *Admiral* of a Navy, which may ſignify the *grand Maſters* of their ſeveral Orders, who have a great many

particular Societies under their Inſpection, which however they rarely viſit in Perſon, but ſend ſuch Orders as they ſee meet, or as they are directed by their Superiors. 2. *The Company in Ships.* Who theſe are, will not be ſo eaſy to determine, it being a Word that ſeldom occurs in Scripture, and by profane Authors it is taken for a *Multitude.* There is a *Verb* derived from it, which ſignifies to *ſpeak*, ὁμιλέω: This therefore may ſignify ſuch as promulgate theſe Orders, and may point at the immediate Heads, who reſide among them, and go under the known Names of *Priors*, *Abbots*; theſe communicate their Inſtructions, and take Care that the ſeveral Members conform themſelves thereto. 3. *Sailers*, which by the Uſe of the Word, *Acts* xxvii. 27. appears to be meant of the Crew, or common Seamen, called *Fore-maſt-men*, who work the Ship; which may ſignify theſe who are under their ſeveral Maſters and Officers, and are much employed about the Affairs of the Houſe. This may point at the Prieſts of the firſt Rank, either already imployed in Miſſions, or ready diſciplin'd for Work; theſe among the *Papiſts* are called *Rowers* of *Peter's Boat.* 4. *As many as trade by Sea*; Which may comprehend all the reſt of the Fry, in all theſe unclean Styes, of whom we heard on *Chap.* xiii. whoſe whole Work is to be fitted for the Service of *Babylon.*

2. The Ground of their Sorrow, *v.* 18. of which we ſee on *v.* 9.

3. The Diſcoveries of their Grief, which we heard of before, except this one, *They caſt Duſt upon their Heads*: This is a Diſcovery of deſpairing Grief; as we ſee it was with the *Iſraelites* in *Joſhua's* Time, when ſmitten before the Men of *Ai*, where it is ſaid, *Joſhua rent his Clothes, and the Elders put Duſt upon their Heads*, Joſh. vii. 6. And when the *Iſraelites* were defeat by the *Philiſtines*, the Meſſenger of the Tidings *came to* Shilo *with his Clothes rent, and Duſt upon his Head*, 1 Sam. iv. 12. An Emblem of the Bitterneſs of their State; they conclude their Sorrow with the Mention of their own Loſs, which will be irreparable, and the Suddeneſs of the Blow, *v.* 19. of all which before.

20 Rejoice over her, thou Heaven, and ye holy Apoſtles and Prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.

This is the *Improvement* the People of God are called to make of the miſerable State of *Babylon*, and the Sorrow of her *Partiſans*. It is not the Voice of any of theſe Mourners, but that Voice which ſpoke to the People of God, *v.* 4. from Heaven, which having already repreſented the melancholly Condition of all that depend on *Babylon*, comes now to excite to true ſpiritual Joy and Thankſgiving unto God. If we read this Verſe, and join thereto what we have in the Beginning of the next Chapter, it will be very plain all the Exultation we find there, is an Anſwer to the Call we have here: Where, 1. The Perſons. 2. Their Work. 3. The Reaſon thereof.

1. The Perſons. This Voice calls one, of three Denominations.

(1.) *Ye Heavens.* Which ſome incline to take properly for the Regions of eternal Bliſs: And that they are here called on, by the Figure *Proſopopoeia*, which aſcribes a perſonal Deed to Things incapable of it, and is not unordinary in Scripture; ſo *Chap.* xii. 12. the Heavens are diſtinguiſhed from their Inhabitants; and by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, which is more to the Purpoſe, *Jer.* li. 48. *Then the Heaven, and the Earth, and all that is therein, ſhall ſing for* Babylon; *for the Spoilers ſhall come to her from the North.* Tho' ſuch Exclamations may be allowed, I ſee no Occaſion for it here, eſpecially that we have in the next Chapter, all theſe in Heaven that rejoice, named; and there is nothing more ordinary than to ſay a whole Houſe rejoiceth, becauſe the Indwellers thereof do ſo; and ſo this will be a *Metonymie*: And then by *Heaven* ſome mean *Angels*, and the *Spirits of juſt Men* made perfect; Others think only the firſt is to be underſtood, becauſe the reſt are mentioned afterwards; Others again take *Heaven*, wherever it occurs in this Prophecy, as an Emblem of the *Church*, and ſo it is a Call to the whole Church in general; which Thought hath this to ſupport it, that *Babylon* never had Power to injure the bleſſed Angels, further than that her Meaſures did obſcure the Glory of God, whoſe Diſhonour they are very ſenſibly touched with. The plain Truth is, at ſuch an univerſal Jubilee as this will be, I am of the Mind, all in Heaven and Earth will have their Share, and bear a Part in this great Solemnity; as alſo we ſaw before in this Prophecy, *Chap.* v. 11. For if the Angels of Heaven rejoice upon the *Converſion of one Sinner*, much more will they, when the great Enemy of Chriſt's Kingdom is brought to the Ground, and many converted to the Faith.

(2.) *Ye holy Apoſtles.* Whether we are to take this properly for theſe extraordinay *Legates* of Chriſt, for the Propagation of the Goſpel; or if it reſpects only their Succeſſors in the Church, whoſe Buſineſs it is, after their Example, and by their Direction and Doctrine

Doctrine, to feed the Flock of Christ, is debated: I see no Difficulty to admit both; yet, if it must be restricted, I think it should rather be to the Apostles themselves, than to any that have succeeded them; and the rather that *Babylon* made it her great Work to *undo* all they had *done*, and to *pervert* the right Meaning of their *Writings*, and father Opinions on these holy Men, they never thought of: And, because the *Apostles* had prayed for, and *propheſied* the Downfall of *Babylon*; that their Words had taken hold on her, they are excited to give Glory to God, who has established the Word of his Servants.

(3.) *The Prophets* are next called upon. Some think these Prophets are only here to be understood, who foretold the Ruin of *spiritual Babylon*: But I think we may be allowed to extend it to all the Prophets, both under the Old and New Testament, and to all such whom God has honoured with the Character of *Prophets*, as the ordinaray Teachers.

2. The Work they are called to, *Rejoice over her*: Orig. *Be of a cheerful and hilarous Mind* upon her Account; or, as some render it, *Take Courage*, q. d. Many a sad and doleful Day this *Babylon* hath occasioned *to you*, but now her Kingdom is at an End, therefore take Courage, for her Ruin will now quickly be accomplished. Yet is not this a carnal Mirth, but a Rejoicing in God, coupled with Fear, wherein they glorify God; as we see, *Chap.* xix. There are good Reasons for this; as, 1. The Glory of *God's Holiness*, *Justice*, and *Power*, will be manifested therein. 2. Because these obscured and perverted Gospel-Truths will again shine forth in their native Beauty. *Babylon* had long abstracted the Key of Knowledge from the World, but then they will be blest therewith again: So that their Joy is not like that of the Wicked, who cannot be merry, unless they grieve God; the Joy of such is but a Sacrifice to the Devil.

3. The Ground of this Joy, *God hath avenged you on her*: Originally, *God hath judged your Judgment upon her*. It may be enquired, Why these *Judgments* are called the Judgments of the *Inhabiters* of Heaven, and of the *Apostles* and *Prophets*, seeing they were mostly out of Time? *Answ.* They are called their Judgments, 1. Because they are the Judments they had prayed for; the Souls under the Altar were importuning God for the Discovery of his Justice against her. 2. Many of them had been honoured in all Ages to fortel and denounce these Judgments, and God will not let one of their Words fall to the Ground. 3. Because God in Justice had meted to *Babylon* that same Measure she had dispensed to the *Saints*, *Apostles*, and *Prophets*. This to me is an Argument that more than *Popish Rome* is comprehended under the Designation of *Babylon*, or *Antichrist*; because *Rome Popish* shed none of the Blood of the *Apostles*: It was *Rome Pagan*, who is no less a Limb of *Antichrist* than the other; nor is *Mahomet* one whit in Malice behind any of them.

This seems plainly to be the Effect of the *fourth Vial*, by which we see Men were scorched with Fire. It is true, we have no Account of the Cause; and the Reason is, Because that was fully expressed, *Chap.* xvi. but there the Effects weremore lightly touched at; and therefore here they are enlarged on, in all these Branchings we have heard. And, notwithstanding of all their *Woes*, we have not one Sign of true Repentance: They are all filled with Fear, Grief, Despair, and Astonishment; But none of them have either a Discovery of *Babylon*'s Guilt, or their own Sin in communicating with her. Nor did they consider that all these Plagues were the Hand of God upon that *Mother of Abominations*; which is plainly advanced in the Close of the fourth Vial. It would be further remarked, that we have not one Word of *Babylon*'s either Grief or Remorse, but only of her Retainers; so that it would appear these will be blasting and hardning Strokes to her. As it was with the *Egyptian Pharaoh*, so here, she never thinks of her Uncleanness and Blood-shed, but always hopes, the Issue of War being uncertain, that if one Campaign be discouraging, the next may be more happy; and therefore she dissembles the Sense of her Loss, hoping sometime to retrieve the Matter: She remembers her old Success, and flatters herself the Times may recur again, when she shall be avenged for all her late Defeats. From all which we may conclude, there is no greater Sign of a forlorn and upgiven People, than of not enquiring into the Grounds of God's Controversy, and their hoping to succeed without Repentance and Conversion to God, the Cause in Justice of all their Woes.

Amplification of VIAL V.

THIS Vial we had, *Chap.* xvi. 10, and 11. It was poured out upon the Seat of the Beast, which had this Effect, to fill the Kingdom of the Beast with Darkness:

This moved in Antichriſt all Diſcoveries of Rage and Indignation. It is amplified from *v.* 21. to the Cloſe of this *Chapter*. Here we have a new Emblem; and not only a Voice, but a Viſion. This ſeems to be heavier than any of the other four.

21 And a mighty Angel took up a Stone, like a great Milſtone, and caſt it into the Sea, ſaying, Thus with Violence ſhall that great City Babylon be thrown down, and ſhall be found no more at all.

22 And the Voice of Harpers, and Muſicians, and of Pipers, and Trumpeters, ſhall be heard no more at all in thee: And no Craftſman, of whatſoever Craft he be, ſhall be found any more in thee; and the Sound of a Milſtone ſhall be heard no more at all in thee.

23 And the Light of a Candle ſhall ſhine no more at all in thee: And the Voice of the Bridegroom, and of the Bride, ſhall be heard onmore at all in thee: For thy Merchants were the great Men of the Earth; for by thy Sorceries were all Nations deceived.

24 And in her was found the Blood of Prophets, and of Saints, and of all that were ſlain upon the Earth.

In this we have, 1. The Emblem. 2. Its Explication. 3. The Reaſons.

I. The Emblem, *v.* 21. where, 1. The Agent. 2. The Action, to the Middle of the Verſe.

1. The Agent, *a mighty Angel*; originally, *One mighty Angel*. To be ſure this Angel differs both from that Angel he ſaw, *v.* 1. and from that Voice he heard, *v.* 4. I ſee not how we can come to the Knowledge who this Angel was, further than that there was no more than *one*, and he a *ſtrong* Angel. This has moved ſome to underſtand *Chriſt* by him, becauſe of the additional Property, *ſtrong*. If we were under a Neceſſity of meaning Chriſt always when we read of a *ſtrong Angel*, no doubt we ought to do ſo here; But it is manifeſt we read of *a ſtrong Angel* in this ſame Prophecy, *Chap.* v. 2. where only a created Angel is ſpoken of: Nor can I ſay expreſly this Angel is a Type of theſe Inſtruments God will imploy to execute this Piece of his Wrath; For the *fifth Angel*, Chap. xvi. 10. is not diſtinguiſhed from the *four* that went before them, or the *two* that followed him: But this diſtinguiſhing Character is probably given him, from what *John* ſaw him do, which was a Work above the Strength of a weak one; And if it ſignify any more, it muſt be this, that God will never want fit Inſtruments for any Piece of Work he deſigns, however difficult it be.

2. The Action performed by this Angel, *He took up a Stone, like a great Milſtone, and caſt it into the Sea.* If this be not a *Quotation*, it is certainly an *Alluſion* to what we read of *literal Babylon*, Jer. li. 63, 64. *And it ſhall be, when thou haſt made an End of reading this Book, that thou ſhalt bind a Stone to it, and caſt it into the Midſt of* Euphrates; *and thou ſhalt ſay, Thus ſhall* Babylon *ſink, and ſhall not riſe from the Evil that I will bring upon her.* This Paſſage aſſures us, that *literal Babylon* was a Type of *myſtical Babylon*, and that the ſame *Eternal Spirit* did inſpire both Prophets. It is true, there is ſome Difference betwixt the Prophecies; As, 1. It is only *a Stone* mentioned againſt *old Babylon*; here it is *a Stone, like a great Milſtone*; which ſhews us that the preſent *Babylon* is much larger and heavier than the old. 2. *Jeremiah*'s Stone was only caſt into the *River*, tho' a great one; but this is caſt into the *Sea*, which is much deeper. 3. *Jeremiah* tied his Stone to the Prophecy after he had read it, probably becauſe the Time was ſhort to the Accompliſhment of it; but no Word of that in this Place, becauſe at leaſt there was to be about Two thouſand Years betwixt the Angel's Action and the Accompliſhment thereof. We ſhall further here notice two Emblems, one of *Babylon*, and another of her Deſtruction.

(1.) The Emblem of *Babylon, a great Stone, like a Milſtone.* She indeed looks on herſelf, not as a great Stone only, but as a *Rock*, yea, as a *great Mountain*, which ſhall never be moved: Yet we are ſure ſhe is no more but *a Stone of Stumbling, and a Rock of Offence.* Here the *Spirit of God* owns her to be like a *Stone*, and an heavy one too; yet ſuch as may be moved, and ſhall be moved, yea, removed by a created Strength. We would notice theſe Things in the *Analogy*; as, 1. She is *obſtinate*, is a Whore, and has a Whore's Forehead, with a Brow of Braſs, incapable of Shame; and a Heart of Stone, without Relenting, or Compaſſion. 2. *Great*; She ſits upon *many Waters*, has under her Juriſdiction many Kingdoms, ſo that all her Time Chriſt's People are but a little

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Flock in Compariſon of her. 3. She is *dead* and inſenſible as a Stone; there is no ſpiritual Life in *Babylon*, all her Members are in black Nature, without Senſe of Sin, or Fear of Miſery. 4. She is *Earthly*, as to her Original, in her Nature, in all her Deſigns, and in all her Endeavours. 5. She is compared to a *Milſtone*, that *grinds* and bruiſeth the *Wheat*: We proved before, that *Wheat* is the Emblem of God's People, *Chap.* xviii. 13. here we ſee how they are treated by *Babylon*, even cruſhed and grinded to Powder, as far as her Power reaches, which, if not reſtrained, would be conſuming of them all. 6. That ſhe is to *laſt long*, but not for ever: A Stone is very *durable*, yet thence we muſt not conclude it to be *everlaſting*, for at length it will crumble to Pieces; yea, Milſtones while they grind are conſum'd, tho' not ſo ſenſibly as what they turn upon; and thus it will be with *Babylon*.

(2.) The Emblem of her Deſtruction, *caſt it into the Sea*. Old *Babylon* was utterly deſtroy'd, and never after inhabited but by wild and venomous Creatures, which made the Place terrible and frightful to all Mankind: And much more will this be the Caſe of *myſtical Babylon*; only we are to underſtand this *ſpiritually*, not as if God would turn all that habitable Part of the World into an howling Wilderneſs was formerly poſſeſſed by *Babylon*, yet I doubt not but he will ſet a Mark of Diſpleaſure upon ſome notable Cities where ſhe moſt neſtled. The Expreſſion has an Increaſe here above what we found in *literal Babylon*, and therefore, in this Emblem of her Deſtruction, we may note theſe Things very ſhortly; 1. Tho' her Bulk and Strength did contribute to her Continuance for a long Time, yet her Weight ſhall haſten her Ruin, when a Divine Hand exerts itſelf; as the Strength and Bulk of a Tower makes it laſty, but when the Foundations thereof are ſapped, how quickly will the Superſtructure tumble down in a moſt ſurpriſing Manner? Now we may reckon the other four Vials were the Approaches of Divine Wrath, which did much *undermine* this City; and ſo, when the fifth hits, its own Weight will make Way for its Fall. 2. Which flows from the former, this Ruin will be moſt ſudden and ſurpriſing, like the throwing a great Stone into the Water. 3. This Deſtruction will be *irreparable*: It is not like a Stone caſt into a Pool, which may be got up again by much Pains; but like a Stone, yea, a great Stone, in the *Depth of the Sea*, whence it can never be fiſhed, becauſe of the Uncertainty of the Place, the Deepneſs of the Part, and Weight of the Stone. 4. It will be with great *Violence*: For tho' the Weight of a great Stone is enough to ſink it, yet, when it is thrown by a *very ſtrong Hand*, the Motion is the quicker, and the Force will drive it the deeper into the Bottom; For ſo much is imply'd in *Caſting*. 5. This Deſtruction is not *caſual*, but after a moſt *deliberate* Manner. A tumbling Stone might ſtop at the Shore, or within the Ebb; but this is to be by Direction caſt into the *Deep*. 6. It will be an *utter* and *intire Deſtruction*, ſhe ſhall never more appear upon the Face of the Earth.

II. The Explication of this Emblem upon the Back of the Angel's Action; and therefore it is added, after he had caſt the Stone, or as he was throwing it, *ſaying*, from the Middle of *v.* 21. to the Middle of *v.* 23. where we are to notice, 1. The Manner of this Deſtruction. 2. The ſad Effects thereof.

1. The *Manner* of her Deſtruction, *v.* 21. We have in a great Meaſure given the Contents thereof in the Explication of the *Emblem*, and therefore ſhall be ſhorter now: It is repreſented in theſe two Expreſſions;

(1.) *Thus with Violence ſhall that great City* Babylon *be thrown down*. Where there is a very plain Similitude betwixt *the Caſting of the Stone*, and *the Fall of* Babylon; great Force in both. Some ſtrong Houſes, through Age, become ſo feeble, that they tumble down of themſelves: But it is no ſo with *Babylon*; for, were ſhe left to herſelf, ſhe might ſtand a long Time; but even in her Strength, and when ſhe has the leaſt Fears, the Vials will be poured out, and ſhe overpowered by a greater Force, that the Power and Juſtice of God may be the more viſible.

(2.) She *ſhall be found no more at all*. Some tell us, We are to underſtand this of *Babylon's Converſion* to *Chriſtianity*; and ſo the Meaning to be, ſhe ſhall be no more infected with *Hereſy* and *Idolatry*. But we had before the Call to the *Elect* to ſeparate from *Babylon*; and therefore, that being under the *ſecond Vial*, it is more than preſumable now when the *fifth* comes, all of them that then flouriſhed have actually ſeparate: And I am confident none in cold Blood will ſay, that *Babylon* or *Antichriſt* will be converted in Bulk, as we have Reaſon to believe will fall to the Share of the *Jews*, which I endeavour'd to prove will be *National*; but no ſuch Thing is to be expected of *Babylon*, nor have they any Promiſe of this Nature, but, on the contrary, an univerſal *Deſolation*, which I think this plainly expreſſeth: And that here the Ruin of all her *Policy*, and whatever deſign'd her a *City*, is to fall out; for not a few of the Perſons, but the

Throng of them, will be reſerved for the Judgment of the ſeventh Vial, which will make a compleat End of that *Mother of Abominations.*

2. The *Effects* of this Deſtruction, *v.* 22, and 23. which in my Opinion demonſtrate this to be a very great Deſtruction. As we were bound to underſtand this City *figuratively*, and not in a proper *literal* Senſe; ſo 'tis neceſſary we underſtand theſe Effects, and fetch their Meaning from that of the City: We have them in theſe Particulars,

(1.) All their Joy and Mirth will evaniſh, *The Voice of Harpers and Muſicians, and of Pipers, and Trumpeters, ſhall be heard no more at all in thee.* This is mentioned in four Specials, whereof three are inſtrumental, and one vocal. We read of the *Mirth* of the Prophane at their carnal Entertainments, *Iſa.* v. 12. *The Harp, the Vial, the Tabret, and the Pipe.* Some take this for the ceaſing of *Church-muſick*, wherein they glory ſo much. Others are at Pains to conſider ſeverally theſe four Sorts of Muſick, and think ſome of them were uſed at *Funerals*, ſome of them at *Marriages*, ſome in *War*, and others at their *Revels*. There may be much Invention in theſe Things, but I can find no Certainty: And, I think all of them are not Truth; for we find Mention made of Marriages in the next Verſe: And it is not ſuppoſable one Effect would be twice tabled in one Enumeration; beſides, we find there were great Wars after this, nor can we doubt but the *martial Inſtruments* would be uſed then. Therefore, I am of Opinion, we had beſt let it run in the general, that all their *Mirth* and *Follity* ſhould ſo evaniſh, as never return again, and her State be moſt ſad.

(2.) All their *Artiſts* would fail them, *No Craſiſman, of whatſoever Craft he be, ſhall be found any more in thee.* There is no ſmall Debate about theſe Artiſts, what they were: Some underſtand them of *Smiths, Carpenters*, &c. which are neceſſary both in Peace and War; Others underſtand *curious Arts*, ſuch as are not ſo much for Neceſſity and Conveniency, as for Curioſity and Vanity: But ſeeing we muſt leave the literal Senſe (which in ſuch a general can be of little Uſe) we need be in no great Pain about them. To be ſure we are to mean theſe *Artiſans* that contributed to the Support and Comfort of this City, as to its *religious* Concerns; for, with Reſpect to theſe, it is called a *City*: And ſo it may comprehend their *Politicians*, and other Seminaries of Uſe, as the *Jeſuites* among the *Papiſts*, and their Tools of this Nature amongſt the *Mahometans*, whoſe Work it is to colour over and varniſh their filthy Projects with the moſt favourable Pretences. Theſe are imployed to their utmoſt Stretch of Capacity, to forge Methods for upholding and propagating the Power and Sovereignty of *Babylon*; and ſo their Doctors in diſputing and writing, may be comprehended therein.

(3.) All theſe Means that were immediately and abſolutely neceſſary for the Support of their Lives, *The Sound of a Milſtone ſhall be heard no more at all in thee.* This may point at their *Courts of Proviſion*, as the *Inquiſitions* where they are, and in other Places theſe Methods uſed in their Stead to drain their Votaries for the common Profit, and who fleece theſe in the leaſt ſuſpected of *Infidelity* or the *Northern Hereſy*; ſo that all the Streams of their Gain will be cut off. When this turns to be the Condition of any State, they are brought to the laſt Pinch; for thereby the Seeds of Diſcontent are ſown among the Subjects: This Method has been long practiſed by the *Mahometans*, and has been the Cauſe of many Seditions.

(4.) In this Depth of *Babylon*'s Miſery, there will be no View of Deliverance, their Darkneſs will be abſolute; for it is added, *v.* 23. *The Light of a Candle ſhall ſhine no more at all in thee.* Some think this to be meant of the *Light* of the *Goſpel*; but here it is ſpoke of a *Light* they had ſometime been in Poſſeſſion of, and ſo this cannot take Place. Others, again, becauſe Candle-light is artificial and compounded, underſtand it of their falſe and feigned Lights, made up by the ſeveral Parts of *Babylon*; as among the *Papiſts*, the *Maſs-book, Canons, Decretals, Legends*, &c. Among the *Mahometans*, the *Alcoran*, and other Comments thereon: Among the *Heathen*, their *Poets, Sybils*, and others of that Nature. While it is ſaid, theſe ſhall be no more in her, is not to be ſo underſtood, as if theſe were no more to be, or exiſt; but that they will loſe their Credit, and ſhine no more in the World, tho' at beſt they were but like a Candle, but then they will be put out. This is ſo curious and appoſite, I cannot reject it altogether: But ſtill, I think, ſomething more is intended. In the Day, the Sun ſaves the Charge of all artificial Light; but when he goes down, we, by Art, ſupply his Place in ſome Meaſure by Lamps, Candles, &c. which alleviates the irkſom Hours of Darkneſs. Now, take the Sun-ſhine for Proſperity, the Night for Adverſity, the Light of the Candle muſt be that whereby we keep Life in our Hopes in ſuch a gloomy Condition; and that being removed, nothing can remain but Horror and Deſpair.

(5.) All

(5.) All Hope of Increaſe will fail them, and all the Joy that flows from that; *The Voice of the Bridegroom, and of the Bride, ſhall be heard no more at all in thee.* Which plainly tells ſhe was to have no more *Proſylites*, neither of Nations or particular Perſons, that would join themſelves to that forlorn Intereſt; and conſequently, all the *Jubilees* and *ſolemn Proceſſions* uſed to be made on that Account, will alſo ceaſe; the World will by that Time get their Eyes opened, and not be ſo eaſily impoſed on by theſe Cheats, as aforetime. This will be the Time of *Babylon*'s Barrenneſs.

III. The Cauſes of all theſe Effects; they are three.

1*ſt* is from the Quality of her *Merchants*, *For thy Merchants were the great Men of the Earth.* Which ſeems to be taken from the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. xxiii. 8. *Who hath taken this Counſel againſt* Tyre, *the crowning City, whoſe Merchants are Princes, and whoſe Traffickers are the honourable of the Earth.* We need be in no Pain to enquire, What Sort of Merchants are here to be underſtood? whether theſe who brought from *Babylon*, or theſe who carried to her? for both are mentioned above, and conſequently both are to be meant here, which makes the Senſe very eaſy. Their own *Brokers* are very great, as *Cardinals*, &c. Theſe who buy from them, are *Emperors* and *Kings*, whom they oblige to pay dear for all their Trumperies. If it be enquired, How this comes to be advanced as the Cauſe of her ſudden Deſtruction? The Anſwer is in Readineſs, Her debauching the Kings of the Earth, is a very great Sin in the Sight of God; and, tho' theſe great Men are not free of Guilt, yet the Sin of *Babylon* is greater; and therefore God is the more provoked againſt her, and brings this terrible Judgment againſt her.

2*d* Reaſon is much of the ſame Nature, but taken from another Ground, *For by thy Sorceries were all Nations deceived.* We heard of *Sorceries* before, *Chap.* ix. 21. Here we have the Miſchief *Babylon* did therewith, *deceived Nations*; not a few, but *all the Nations of the Earth.* We need make no Scruple, tho' this be taken in its largeſt Acceptation; for there is no Nation under the Sun, which has not been trapan'd by the Deluſion of either *Popery*, *Mahometaniſm*, or *Paganiſm*. This ſeems to be nothing elſe but the *golden Cup of the Filthineſs of her Fornication, wherewith ſhe had intoxicate the Kings of the Earth*, Chap. xiv. 18. Chap. xviii. 3. And, when once *Kings* are carried off, and do heartily imbark in her *Intereſt*, they quickly bring their *Subjects* after them; which is a Piece of Wickedneſs, tho' God ſeem now to wink at, yet will be ſure to puniſh ſeverely.

3*d* Reaſon we have, *v.* 24. *In her was found the Blood of Prophets, and of Saints, and of all that were ſlain upon the Earth.* Where, 'tis plain, *Perſecution* is given as one of the *diſtinguiſhing Characteriſticks* of *Babylon myſtical*; Wherefore, wherever this is to be found, we may reckon they have it from her, and therein with her agree. From this we are ſure, God will make Enquiry for the Blood of all, and of his own eſpecially; and will reſerve freſh, ſuch Evidences as will convict *Babylon* of all her Murders and Perſecutions. Here this Guilt is ſumm'd up in *three Heads*, accord ng to the Qualities of theſe ſhe *wrecks* her Spite upon: As, 1. *Prophets*, that is, all the Lord's Servants, whom he had imployed to bear the Manifeſtations of his Name, in order to eternal Life unto the Children of Men. We need not be nice to diſtinguiſh; for it is to comprehend all that ever had that Deſignation, either in the Old or New Teſtament, and of whatever Sort they were; if contemporary with *Babylon*, ſhe miſſed not to have a Fling at them. 2. *Saints*, that is, private *Chriſtians* of all Ranks and Degrees. Sanctity is not a Note of Diſtinction betwixt the *Prophets* and *them*, but betwixt them and theſe after-mentioned; for the *firſt* are deſigned from their *Office*, and the *ſecond* from their *Quality*, and both of them concern the Church. 3. *All that were ſlain upon the Earth.* I ſee not how we ſhould make this comprehend the other two, when it is plainly a Diſcrimination from them. The Senſe ſeems to be this, God will charge upon *Babylon*, all that Blood ſhe was the Occaſion of ſpilling, in all her unjuſt and groundleſs Wars, and of all theſe Wars ſhe has fomented. How much this will amount to, may be conjectured from the bloody Wars of *Romans*, *Papiſts*, and *Mahometans*; all which is ſo plain, it needs no Inlargement.

The Harmony of this Amplification with *Vial fifth*, is moſt obvious. The *Vial* fell upon the Seat of the Beaſt; Here *Babylon* is flung into the Sea: There Darkneſs followed; Here there is not ſo much as the Light of a Candle: There they gnawed their Tongues for Pain; Here, in the *Effects*, all Comfort is withdrawn from her: There they blaſphem'd: Here their attrocious Guilt caſts up, nor is there any Word of Repentance in either.

CHAP. XIX.

ACcording to what was ſaid in the *Introduction* of the foregoing *Chapter*, this is to contain the *Amplification* of the *ſixth* and *ſeventh Vials*, which is owned on all Hands; tho' ſome contend the *Eighteenth* Chapter has nothing to do with the *Vials*, but is a *Parentheſis* of Matters of Fact, to fall out after the *fifth* Vial, and before the *ſixth*: But if what is advanced on that Chapter be juſt, this Thought muſt fall. However that be, we are once more reconciled about the Scope of this Chapter in general; yet there is a Difference about the *Diſtribution* of this into two Parts, which ariſeth from different Thoughts about the *ſixth Vial*; which ſome would have to contain no more but the *Rendezvouze* of the *Armies*, and caſt the *Action* under the *ſeventh Vial*: Yet, on the *ſixteenth Chapter*, I made the *ſixth Vial* to comprehend the *Action*, as well as the *muſtering* of their Armies; Nor do I ſee how I can change my Mind, for theſe Reaſons, 1. Becauſe the Collection of theſe Armies could be no Plague without a Defeat, both becauſe theſe Kings come together fluſh'd with Hopes of Victory, and that they ſhould retrieve their former Loſſes; and we are ſure every Vial muſt contain a *Plague* or Stroke, as I proved on the Beginning of *Chap.* xv. So that, if we allow no *Stroke*, we may conclude there is no *Plague*, and conſequently there ſhall be only *ſix Plagues* in the *ſeven Vials*. 2. We nowhere read of the Action, either in the ſixteenth Chapter, or in this nineteenth; only that they came to *Battle*, but no Word of the *Engagement*: Nor can we place it more appoſitely any where, than after the Armies are brought to the Field of Battle; for they came not there to gaze at one another, but to fight. Beſides, we know that for two Armies *to look one another in the Face*, is the ſame Thing in Scripture as to fight; ſo it is ſaid, 2 *Kings* xiv. 8. Amaziah *ſent Meſſengers to* Jehoaſh *King of* Iſrael, *ſaying, Come, let us look one another in the Face.* 3. There is no Account of any *Engagement* in the *ſeventh Vial*, for it is plainly a *Stroke* upon the ſcattered and defeated Army of *Babylon*; ſo that I think there is as great Difference betwixt the *ſixth* and *ſeventh Vials*, as is betwixt the *Vintage* and the *Gleanings*. The Strength of *Babylon*'s Arm was broke under the *ſixth Vial*, and under the *ſeventh* the Reſidue of them who were ſcattered and fled were gleaned: And I find it juſt, for they were either taken or ſlain. I therefore take the Amplification of the *ſixth Vial* to reach to *v.* 20. of this Chapter, and that of the *ſeventh* to be comprized in the laſt two Verſes.

Amplification of VIAL VI.

In this Amplification we have ſome Steps that cannot be fetched from the Emblem in the *Vial*; yet I think, while the Emblem diſcovers the Diligence of *Babylon*, this points out the Exerciſe of the Church: So that there is no Inconſiſtency; for here the firſt Part of the Amplification concerns the Church, as the firſt Part of the Emblem of the *Vial* did *Babylon*; but thereafter they moſt harmoniouſly agree, to the Conviction of all. Now, in this I ſhall notice theſe general Parts; 1. A twofold Thankſgiving, one to *v.* 5. the other to *v.* 8. 2. A ſpecial and comfortable Emblem of the then State of the Church, to *v.* 11. 3. A new Viſion, differing little, ſave in its Fulneſs, from the Emblem of the Vial, to *v.* 20.

1 AND after theſe Things I heard a great Voice of much People in Heaven, ſaying, Alleluiah, Salvation, and Glory, and Honour, and Power unto the Lord our God:

2 For true and righteous are his Judgments; for he hath judged the great Whore, which did corrupt the Earth with her Fornication, and hath avenged the Blood of his Servants at her Hand.

3 And again they ſaid, Alleluiah: And her Smoke roſe up for ever and ever.

4 And the Four and twenty Elders, and the four Beaſts, fell down and worſhipped God that ſat on the Throne, ſaying, Amen, Alleluiah.

Here

Here is a notable *Triumph* upon the Back of the *fifth Vial*, which hit the Seat of the Beaſt, and gave him a deadly Blow. No doubt this is in Anſwer to that Call in *v.* 20. of the preceeding Chapter, tho' we have not their Exultation till after the *fifth Vial* is amplified; for the Call is interjected betwixt the Amplification of the *fourth* and *fifth*. One of two will remove any Difficulty here: If we allow this *Jubilee* to begin after the *fourth Vial*, and continue all the *fifth*, it will only ſay the Interſtice will be ſhort, which I ſhewed was a very probable Thought: Or, if this do not pleaſe, as I find it does not univerſally, then we may allow that Call given in the former Chapter, to be an Alarm to engage their Attention to the Contents of the *fifth Vial*, and thereby prepare the Church for this *gratulatory Song*; and ſo immediately upon the Back of the *fifth Vial* they break forth in this Thankſgiving, ſo obſervable in all its Parts: And indeed I ſee not how the Church ſhould have a Carriage becoming the *Providences* of God towards them, and his *Juſtice* againſt their Enemies, and be longer ſilent. Perhaps the Surprize in the former four Vials might ſtun them, but now, being recovered out of this Amazement, they tell their Mind, eſpecially that a Voice from Heaven encourages them thereto. In this we have, 1. The Perſons. 2. Their Praiſe. 3. The Grounds of their Song. 4. The Repetition of their Praiſe. 5. The Homologation thereof by others.

1. The *Perſons*, v. 1. As for the connecting Clauſe, *After theſe Things I heard*; it is what we have often met with in the Courſe of this Prophecy, and we are ſure points out the Order of the Manifeſtation, *i. e. John* had this Viſion after the Diſcovery of what is narrated in the preceeding Chapter. But that any ſhould gather from this, that the Things here mentioned are different from the preceeding Threed of the Viſion, I ſee not; much leſs that it can point at ſome Period of Time long before the ſixth Vial. Nor will the Example of ſome *Hiſtorians*, whether *Heathen* or *Chriſtian*, juſtify this Thought; when, after they have related ſome Tranſactions of a late Date, by a backward Step, do again fall to account for Things prior to theſe: For, even when this is done, they give their Reader to underſtand it, by pointing at the *Synchroniſm* of the various Events in one Period, or by intimating what is after ſpoke of is of an an older Date, elſe they ſhould more perplex than inſtruct. But here there is ſuch an Harmony in all the Parts of this Part of the Prophecy, we cannot disjoin it, without being at the greateſt Loſs where to fix the Order and Chain of the *Prophecy*. The Perſons are deſcribed from their *Number, Voice and Place.*

(1.) They are deſcribed from their Number, *much People*, originally, *a great Multitude*; or, as ſome Copies have it, *many Multitudes*. It is controverted who theſe are? Some take them to be the ſame with theſe we have, *v.* 5. *All God's Servants, and they that fear him.* Tho' this *Character* may well agree to them, putting aſide the Note of Univerſality, yet it mars the Beauty of the *Gradation* of this ſolemn Thankſgiving, which will afterwards caſt up: Beſides, theſe mentioned *v.* 5. ſeem to be ſtirred up by them, *v.* 1. and upon their Account, whereby the Joy of the Church is compleated, at leaſt inlarged. Others again, by them, mean *Angels*. I have often remarked before, that *Angels* were imployed to repreſent theſe Things to *John*, yet they were but Emblems of others that were to exiſt in the Church; for whatever Share *Angels* take in the *Increaſe* of Chriſt's Kingdom, yet they are not the *Members* thereof. Others again think this great *Multitude* are all new *Converts* that had come over to *Chriſt's Camp* with the *Kings of the Eaſt*, in the Beginning of the *ſixth Vial*. This I own bids faireſt for the Truth: But a late Writer has rejected it, and tells us, All the Scope of this Place is to aſſure us, the *Angels*, upon the Knowledge of this Prophecy, *that* Babylon *ſhall fall*, were ſo pleaſed, that they broke forth into this Song; and conſequently, that this only reſpects the Time of the Viſion, and nothing is in the Event to correſpond therewith. This indeed is very ſmooth, and not inconſiſtent with the *Analogy* of Faith; yet one may remind this great Author, he had made the *four Living Creatures* Angels of a ſuperior Order, *Chap.* iv. and that they led the Choir in all heavenly Anthems, yet here he makes them to follow other *Angels* of an inferior Order in their Songs. Beſides, the Song itſelf cannot agree to Angels, and therefore I am of the Mind, we are to mean by this Multitude a great Number of *Proſylites* will be added to the Church after the *fifth Vial*; and ſo it is the Anſwer of that Call, *v.* 4. of *Chap.* xviii.

(2.) They are deſcribed by their Voice, called a *great Voice*, i. e. a loud and ſonorous Voice; and no leſs articulate, for he underſtood what was emitted by them. That it is ſaid this Voice *was as the Voice of a great Multitude*, will not ſay the Thing was not real, but it ſays, *John* did not ſee theſe whoſe Voice he heard; yet it was ſuch a Noiſe as a gladſom Multitude do uſually make; for theſe can no more reſtrain their Voices in Praiſe, than the *Mourners* in the former Chapter were able to ſuppreſs their Senſe of *Babylon*'s Miſery in the moſt dolorous Expreſſions.

(3.) The Place where this Voice was, *In Heaven.* This many take in the most proper Sense; but we have seen before, that tho' sometimes Heaven is necessarily so to be understood in this Prophecy, as when it is the Theatre of Vision, yet elsewhere it may well signify the *Church*; especially *here*, that *John* had this Vision in the *Wilderness*, and not in *Heaven* as he had the second. And it seems reasonable we should take this for the Church, tho' in the mean Time I shall allow the real Voices *John* heard were truly in *Heaven*; yet even *Heaven* may be lookt upon as a Figure of the *Church*: And when that Time comes, there will be as much Joy in the Church on Earth, as was then typified by the Angels in Heaven.

2. We have their Song of Praise, in the rest of *v.* 1. The Object is the *Lord our God*, the common Designation Believers on Earth are honoured to mention to God, and has a Covenant-relation wrapt up therein. In the Song itself I shall only notice these few Things, which did not occur before;

(1.) *Alleluia*, which is an *Hebrew* Word composed of two *Roots*; the first signifies *to praise*, the other is a proper Name of God; so that, when they are joined together, as we find often in the *Psalms*, the Meaning is, *Praise ye the Lord*; and is read by the Learned much as we express it, *Hallelujah*; but the *Greeks*, to humour their own *Idiom*, leave out the Aspiration. It makes no small Stir with some, why an *Hebrew* Word should come in the Midst of a Sentence? Some say, Because there is a great *Mystery* couched up in it, which they frame according to their various Conceits: But we should not seek Mysteries without good Warrant; and when we get a Reason why several other *Hebrew* Words are continued in all Languages without any Version, it will be Time enough to answer this Question; particularly *Hosanna*, *Amen*, &c. And if the common Return be given, *viz.* That they are sufficiently known, we may allow this to take Place here also. However, we see it is a most solemn, as well as common Form of Thanksgiving.

(2.) *Salvation*, of which we read, *Chap.* xii. 10. Only here it seems plain, from the common and most received Notion of *Salvation*, that it cannot be the Song of *Angels*, but of the *Redeemed* of the Lord. Nor can it have a just Sense in the Mouths of *Angels*, especially that in their proper Song, *Chap.* v. 12. they make no mention of this, tho' the Beasts and Elders did in a very pointed Manner, while they say, *Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood.* The other three were explained, *Chap.* v. 12.

3. The Grounds of their Song, *v.* 2. are *God's Justice and Faithfulness.*

(1.) They praise the Justice of God, *True and righteous are his Judgments, for he hath judged the great Whore*, &c. We had Expressions to this Purpose, *Chap.* xv. 3. *Chap.* xvi. 7. where we explained the Words. Some struggle to extend this to all the Works of *Divine Justice*, and would have it reach even to his *Remunerative.* I shall be easy about the former: As for the latter, it seems to be the Scope of the next Clause. But even as to the *first*, the given Sense is plainly to support a *Hypothesis* which is weak enough with this, and will yet be more so without it, *viz.* That Angels are the Speakers here. They apprehend it would be more agreeable to them, to commemorate the general and *universal Justice* of God, than to be confined to this one Dispensation thereof, which would insinuate something of their particular Interest in it; and consequently, that Believers are here the Persons that praise God. I only offer two Notes from the Text; 1. It would be no *Solycism* to imagine Angels to celebrate the Praises of God's Justice, even upon a special Dispensation, tho' it were not wrought for their Behoof, provided we allow them to know the same, which no doubt God can easily reveal to them; and so this Sense will neither weaken nor strengthen any Scheme. 2. Where can be the Hardship to confine the Mention of God's Righteousness, when the Text does plainly restrict it, as here, and brings in the Particular as the Ground of the Acknowledgment, *For he hath judged the great Whore*? None in his Wits can doubt, that this immediately eyes the *Plagues* of God on *Babylon* in the former Vials, which had brought her very low. The several Terms we had above.

(2.) They praise him for his Faithfulness, *God hath avenged the Blood of his Servants at her Hand.* Some think this is borrowed from *Moses*'s Song, *Deut.* xxxii. 43. *Rejoice, ye Nations with his People; for he will avenge the Blood of his Servants, and will render Vengeance unto his Adversaries.* It is certain these Songs are like other, as are the Occasions upon which they were compos'd: But I rather incline to join these, who think this has an immediate Respect to the Prayers of the Saints under the Altar, *Chap.* vi. 11. And when the two are laid together, we will find in this last a compleat Answer to the first; the Word, *avenged*, signifies throughly to revenge.

4. The Repetition of their Praise, *v.* 3. *Again they said, Alleluiah*, &c. This is no vain Repetition, nor will it justify such in *Litanies* which are really vain. These Reasons will vindicate this from the Imputation of Vanity, 1. To shew the deep Sense

Senſe they had of this wonderful Mercy. It is natural for People to ingeminate Words, when any Thing great, whether it be good or evil, befals them: And this Revenge will be very notable, which the People of God will diſcover their Senſe of, by doubled Praiſes. 2. That they in their Thankſgiving may be as hearty as the Partiſans of *Babylon* were in their Sorrow: For as theſe, out of the great Anguiſh of their Soul, did redouble their *Alas*; ſo here the Godly do alſo repeat their *Alleluia*. 3. is in the Text, *And her Smoke roſe up for ever and ever*: We had this before, with little Variation, as the Ground of the Kings Mourning, *Chap.* xviii. 9. her Ruin was utter and irreparable, the Saints were now out of all Hazard of ever being more troubled with *Babylon*. Others think this Senſe is adjected by the *Prophet*, who, having heard theſe Songs once and again, did turn his Eyes to the emblematical Flame of *Babylon*, which he diſcovered to be unquenchable; and that it would not be in the Power of all her Friends, unite together, to extinguiſh the ſame. Others think this is with Alluſion to the Smoke of Incenſe, that mounts up to Heaven, and is acceptable to God; and ſo is the Exerciſe of *God's Juſtice* upon his implacable Enemies: He has Pleaſure and Satisfaction therein. 4. They might do this, to write after the Copy of the inſpired Muſicians, who frequently begin and end their Song with *Hallelujah*, to ſhew they carried the grateful Impreſſion of the Mercy along with them: Or, as others ſay, The firſt is an *Exhortation*, and the laſt an *Exclamation*.

5. We had this Song homologate and ſubſcribed to, by others, *v.* 4. Who they are, has been explained, and vindicate, *Chap.* iv. 4, 5, 7. They repreſent the whole viſible Church upon Earth; and no Wonder they rejoiced with great Joy, when there was ſuch a Diminution of the *Kingdom* of *Antichriſt*, and ſuch Acceſſion to the Kingdom of *our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*: We alſo conſidered their Proſtration, *Chap.* iv. 10. as we did that of *Worſhip*, Ibid. There is here one Thing caſts up to ſatisfy our Minds about *him that ſate on the Throne*. It was debated by ſome, Who this ſhould be? Here we have a very ſhort, but plain Anſwer; *God ſate on the Throne*, and to him the Worſhip was paid, and not to *Hamond's Biſhop*. We have further the Approbation of, and Conſent given by the militant Church, to the Praiſe of their young Brethren: They add *Amen*, to what theſe had ſaid, and then join with them in the ſame Voice of Praiſe, *Alleluia*. The Uſe of the Word here, eſpecially that it is coupled with *Amen*, tell us, there is no Myſtery in any of them, tho' ſome Expoſitors are at Pains to amuſe themſelves and the World with *Myſteries* in them both.

5 And a Voice came out of the Throne, ſaying, Praiſe our God, all ye his Servants, and ye that fear him, both Small and Great.

6 And I heard as it were the Voice of a great Multitude, and as the Voice of many Waters, and as the Voice of mighty Thundrings, ſaying, Alleluia; for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give Honour to him; for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made herſelf ready.

This contains the other Song of Praiſe, and ſeems to be more univerſal than the former; tho' the Learned differ as to the Application thereof, while ſome underſtand it of the Praiſe of *Angels*, and the *Spirits of juſt Men made perfect*. But I am ſurprized ſome of *great Name* ſhould refer ſo many Paſſages of this Prophecy to the *triumphant State* of the Church; while we are ſure, the Intendment of the whole Prophecy is concerning the *militant Church*; nor can we account for the Comfort of this Revelation otherwiſe: For ſimply to tell us, The Exerciſe of the Bleſſed above is all Praiſe and Joy, can do but little to raiſe the fainting Minds of poor wreſtling Churches below, if nothing of Conſolation remain'd for them but what they are to expect after Time. Beſides, how can we account for ſuch a *Jump*, as from the Joys of Heaven, to the greateſt Conqueſts on Earth, mentioned in the next Part of the *Chapter*? So that this muſt concern the Church on Earth. However, our Difficulty is not over; for there is a great Diſpute about theſe Praiſers. Some make them theſe mentioned before; others tell, They are the converted *Jews*, becauſe the *Gentiles* were meant in the former Part: So far indeed they ſeem to be in the right, that there will be as univerſal a Collection of the Church againſt the Battle of *Armageddon*, as of her Enemies. If we place not the Calling of the *Jews* under the *ſixth Vial*, I ſee not where we can diſpoſe of it; for both they and the *Gentiles* will be Witneſs to the five former Vials upon *Babylon*, which will convince them, that ſhe is the *great Whore*; and that the Church is *the Bride, the Lamb's Wife*: And therefore, not only the *Fulneſs* of the *Gentiles*, but the

Reduction of the *Jews*, is to be comprized in this: for both, and not one of them, make the *Bride*. And we ſee, *v.* 7. *She hath made herſelf ready*. I do not ſay, She will then be in her perfect Trim, which is to ſucceed the ſeventh Vial; but ſhe will be in a very great Forwardneſs, and very near in a perfect Dreſs: And, to be ſure, this will make a moſt cheerful and univerſal Thankſgiving. But we would look into the ſeveral Parts of this Paſſage, where we notice, 1. The Call. 2. The Anſwer thereto. 3. The Ground of both, after the Repetition of the Praiſe.

I. The Call: Where, 1. Whence it came. 2. What it uttered.

1. Whence the Voice came, *A Voice came out of the Throne*. Some would have this the Voice of Chriſt: I cannot go in with it, tho' I own he might have been the Author of this Call; The Reaſon is, This Caller ſeems plainly to be him whom the Apoſtle out of a Miſtake was about to worſhip, *v.* 10. Beſides, the Appearance of our Lord is reſerved till afterwards. This ſame Reaſon carries it off from an *Angel*; for he ſays, *I am thy Fellow-Servant*, v. 10. and therefore this muſt be the Voice of ſome one or other about the Throne: It may be, he was one that figured either the *Elders* or *Beaſts*, or he might be diſtinct from both; but, to be ſure, he was one of the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect, who was ordered of God to this Purpoſe.

2. What this *Voice* ſaid; where, 1. Whom he called, *All ye his Servants, and ye that fear him, both Small and Great*. This is ſo univerſal, that we cannot find any Thing more extenſive: I am eaſy about the Deſignations, *Servants*, and *ye that fear God*. We may take the one for *Jews*, and the other for *Gentiles*; or the one for *Miniſters*, and the other for *private Chriſtians*: I am ſure it muſt comprehend all of them, and that this Voice will reach them all; ſo that all the Church of God on Earth is comprehended here. 2. What they were called to, *Praiſe our God*; the Deſignation given *God, our God*. v. 1. He is called, *the Lord our God*; here ſimply, *our God*. This to me ſeems no good Reaſon that only Angels are to be meant, *v.* 1. but rather that they are *Proſylites*, who, being brought off from their Idolatry, will endeavour to diſtinguiſh the true God from the gods they had ſerved, in the moſt expreſs Manner imaginable; as we find others have done before, *Iſa.* xxvi. 13. *O Lord our God, other lords have had Dominion over us, but by thee only will we make Mention of thy Name*. And here, while the whole Church is called together, the Expreſſion is more *ſimple*, yet no leſs *comprehenſive*. While the two Expreſſions, the *Lord our God*, are joined together, they compriſe in them all that is neceſſary to conſtitute a good Chriſtian; the fearing God inwardly, and ſerving him outwardly: Which muſt be owned to be Expreſſions more adapted to the State of the *militant* than the *triumphant Church*; and eſpecially that we find them diſtribute into their ſeveral Ranks, *Small and Great*: This ſhews us there will then be a great Change upon the Face of the Church; for, whereas before the great Men had ſet themſelves in a ſtated Oppoſition to the Kingdom of Chriſt, now theſe Kings mentioned, *Chap.* xvii. 16, 17. will fall off from *Babylon*; and ſo there will be *Great* as well as *Small* in the Church. It ſeems hard to think, none but the *Jews* will be concerned in this; for this will be the moſt univerſal Gratulation in any Part of this Prophecy.

II. The Anſwer to this Call, *v.* 6. 1. by Similitudes. 2. By Words.

1. The Anſwer is deſcribed by three Similitudes, of which in Order.

(1.) It is compared to *the Voice of a great Multitude*. This ſeems to be the plaineſt Expreſſion, and tells us very many join'd in this: Nor can I ſee from this Expreſſion, how it ſhould not be a Multitude, and a *great Multitude*, becauſe it is ſaid, *As the Voice of a great Multitude*; eſpecially ſince I have proven, that this Phraſe does not at all exclude the *Reality* of the Thing, but rather eſtabliſheth it: For, to be ſure, a great Multitude makes a great Noiſe, when they all utter the ſame Thing at the ſame Time.

(2.) *As the Sound of many Waters*. Some think this Compariſon is made to *Waterfalls* or *Caſcads*, to diſtinguiſh the Sound, eſpecially from the *mourning* Noiſe of the *Friends* of *Babylon* in the *former Chapter*, which was *ſad* and *doleful*; whereas here it is *loud* and *roaring*: For nothing can have a louder Noiſe, than a great *Cataract*; And much more when there are many of them, for then it is not poſſible to hear any other Voice while theſe are near.

(3.) *As the Voice of mighty Thundrings*. This is ſtill more formidable; any Thunder has a *loud Sound*, but ſome *Thunders* have a moſt confounding Noiſe. This ſhews the Voice was quite deſtitute of all Fear; for, as Thunder in itſelf is free of Fear, ſo it fills with Fear all that hear the ſame. The Church will be very ſtout at that Period, when the *Lamb* will exert himſelf as the *Lion of the Tribe of* Judah, and will fill with Fear all the Nations of the Earth. All theſe *Similies* do moſt patly agree to the *Jubilations* of the Church of God upon Earth; and each of them are a Degree greater

ter than another: Nor, without doing Violence to the Text, can we ſtrain them to any other Purpoſe.

2. Their Words; ſo that it was not a confuſed Noiſe, for he underſtood the Words; *Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.* Theſe who put this Song in the Mouth of *Angels*, ſay, All the Intendment thereof is to celebrate the *providential* Government of God in the World. But then, I enquire, 1. When either *Angels* or *Men* wanted that Subject of Praiſe? 2. How will they be able to connect this with the grand Scope of the Prophecy, which is deſigned to ſhew God's ſpecial Care of his Church? If it be ſaid, The Deſtruction of *Babylon* was ſurely a wonderful providential Work; And, why may we not allow *Angels* to take a conſiderable Share therein? I am very ready to yield all. But, ſtill I demand, 3. If this be all the Senſe of the Words? I am ſure, not: Yea, theſe who oppoſe our Senſe, confeſs it is not; but that, beſides, it comprehends the Advancement of Chriſt's *Kingdom*, and the Exaltation of his *Kingly Power*, as is imported in the Word *reigneth*; which is not ſo to be underſtood, as if Chriſt had no Kingdom *before*, but that then his Kingdom will be more *conſpicuous* and obſervable than *before*: And ſo it ſeems to be much of a Piece with the *ſeventh Trumpet*, Chap. xi. 17. *Thou haſt taken to thee thy great Power, and reigned*; For not only will his Feet be upon the Necks of his Enemies, but his Sceptre will be over all Lands, *For all the Kingdoms of the Earth will become the Kingdom of our Lord, and of his Chriſt.* To be *King of Saints*, and *King of Nations*, will be the ſame at this Time. This will be plain, when we conſider, in the next Place,

III. The Grounds of both, *v.* 7. after the Repetition of the Call to Praiſe, *Let us be glad, and rejoice, and give Honour to him.* Where we have a Call to three Acts; 1. *Let us be glad*; which diſcovers the inward Exultation of the Heart. This is the Fruit of Faith, and makes Amends for the Croſſes and Loſſes they had ſuſtained before. 2. *Rejoice*; this points at the outward *Diſcoveries* thereof. When Sorrow for Sin is right, there will be external Manifeſtations: And, juſt ſo, when our *Joy* in God is great, it will not be poſſible to conceal it, but it will diſcover itſelf; as in *David*, who *danced before the Lord with all his Might.* 3. *Give Honour to him*; this is the Characteriſtick of *ſpiritual Joy.* It is always turned Home to God, as its firſt Spring, and laſt End: So we find it noticed for the Praiſe of the leprous *Samaritan*, Luke xvii. 18. *He returned to give Glory to God.* Then will be verified that Prophecy, *Zech.* xiv. 9. *The Lord ſhall be King over all the Earth: In that Day ſhall there be one Lord, and his Name one.* The Grounds are theſe two;

1*ſt* is taken from the Solemnity of the Occaſion, *For the Marriage of the Lamb is come.* Who the *Lamb* is, we heard, *Chap.* v. 8. now we read of his Marriage. 'Tis a very ordinary Thing in Scripture, to deſign the ſpiritual Union betwixt Chriſt and *Believers*, a Marriage; *Iſa.* liv. 5. *Thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hoſts is his Name; and thy Redeemer the holy One of* Iſrael, *the God of the whole Earth ſhall he be called.* Ezek. xvi. 8 *When I paſſed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy Time was the Time of Love: I ſpread my Skirt over thee, and covered thy Nakedneſs; yea, I ſware unto thee, and entred into a Covenant with thee, ſaith the Lord, and thou becameſt mine.* To all which the Apoſtle alludes, *Eph.* v. 29, &c. The Union between Chriſt and *Believers* is called a *Marriage-Union*, on theſe Conſiderations, 1. Becauſe there the Intervention of an *Oath* or a Covenant. 2. Becauſe of the Intimacy of the Union, *they are one Spirit.* 3. Becauſe of the *Fruitfulneſs* the Church. 4. Becauſe of *Chriſt's Care* of her. 5. Becauſe of her *Subjection* to him. 6. Becauſe of their *mutual Love.*

I am not to refuſe, when Chriſt has prepared his Church, and *preſents her without Spot, or Wrinkle, or any ſuch Thing* unto the Father, but it may in ſome Senſe be called a *nuptial Solemnity*: But this I am ſure of, that the moſt Part of the Scriptures adduced to prove and illuſtrate this, are not to the Purpoſe, but reſpect a Period of the Church before that; Nay, I am confident, one of the greateſt Grounds of Analogy fails, when ſhe comes to Heaven, *viz. Fruitfulneſs.* There is a Scripture they lay the greateſt Streſs on to prove their Point, *Mat.* xxii. 2, *&c.* the *Parable of the Marriage of the King's Son*; Which, I think, is not in the leaſt to the Purpoſe: And the common Conſent of Expoſitors juſtify this, and own that it is not to be meant of *a State of Glory*, but of the *ſpiritual Union* of Souls to Chriſt, through the Means of Grace. Another Place of Scripture they apprehend makes for them, *Pſal.* xlv. *the Song of Loves*: Yet I think that plainly reſpects the State of the Church upon Earth, and not in Heaven, which the Context proves, *v.* 16. *Inſtead of thy Fathers ſhall be thy Children, whom thou mayſt make Princes in all the Earth.* Whence it is plain, it is not poſſible to apply this to the *glorified State* of the Church; Yea, I queſtion much, if we can find one Text in all the Scripture, after Conſideration, will ſupport this Opinion. I might add, That the Notion of *Marriage* ſuits ill with glo-

rified State of the Church: When (if we believe our Lord) all in that Condition are quite out of the Way of *Wedding* or *Marrying*, and what belongs to it, in all, at leaſt moſt of the Particulars above-mentioned. But my Deſign is only to ſhew the plain Senſe of this Text.

Now we read of two Sorts of Marriage between Chriſt and *Believers*; one is *perſonal*, and interveens betwixt Chriſt and *every Believer*, and this is contracted at their firſt Converſion; of this we read by the Apoſtle *Paul*, 2 Cor. xi. 2. *I have eſpouſed you to one Husband, that I may preſent you as a chaſt Virgin to Chriſt.* Thus Believers have been, and will continue to be *wedded* to him, thorow all the Ages of the World. There is another *Marriage* betwixt Chriſt and the *Catholick Church*, of which every Believer is a conſtituent Member (for it conſiſts of Believers only) and tho' this be true of all that ever were in the World, or ever are to be in it, yet it is to be underſtood of Churches that are *cotemporary*; which is what I take to be what comes under the Deſignation of the *Bride the Lamb's Wife*; when not only particular Believers here and there, but whole Churches, are in *Covenant* with Chriſt, in a moſt upright Manner. As the whole Nation of the *Iſraelites* were *externally* in Covenant with God, ſo the Time is coming, when the *Whole*, at leaſt the far *greater Part* of the World, will be *internally* eſpouſed to him. Of this I reckon the Pſalmiſt ſings, in that xlv. Pſalm: And of this it is our Text ſpeaks; and yet more fully in the following Chapters: For, when *Antichriſt* falls, the Church of Chriſt will be raiſed to her utmoſt Beauty on Earth, and be bleſt with all theſe Perfections ſhe is capable of in Time; And then ſhe ſhall be a fruitful Mother for no leſs than the Space of a Thouſand Years. And therefore it is here ſaid, *The Marriage of the Lamb is come*: For, tho' there were many Believers before united to Chriſt, yet their Number was ſmall in any Age, in Compariſon of what it will be then; which will as far exceed the preſent Condition of the *Church*, as *Heaven* will do *that*. Can we think but this will be ſufficient Ground of Joy and Gladneſs to all both in Heaven and Earth?

2*d* Ground is taken from the Diſpoſition of the Church, *His Wife hath made herſelf ready*. There is no Reluctancy here; the Church then cheerfully and ſincerely cloſeth with Chriſt. When it is ſaid, *She made herſelf ready*, it does not ſay it will be in her Power to put herſelf in this Trim: For the next Verſe defeats that, where it is ſaid, *To her was given that ſhe ſhould be arayed*; ſo that her *Bridegroom* is at all the Charge of her *Fineries*. But the Meaning is, She will then intirely obey that Voice, *Pſal.* xlv. 10. *Hearken, O Daughter, and conſider, and incline thine Ear: Forget alſo thine own People, and thy Father's Houſe.* The Vail will be cleanly removed from the Heart of the *Jews*, the *Gentiles* will tamely ſubmit themſelves to the *Yoke of Chriſt*; all the Enemies will then be on one Side, and all the Elect will fall in to Chriſt's Banner: So that here, tho' I cannot think this allenarly concerns the *Jews* in their *Reduction*, yet I am ſure the *Gentile Church* will not be perfect without them: And when both do unite into one Body, whereof Chriſt is the Lord, Head, and Husband, then will the Lamb's Wife be ready; and this will be a full Explication of that Text, *Rom.* xi. 15. *What ſhall the Receiving of them* [the Jews] *be, but Life from the Dead?*

8 And to her was granted, that ſhe ſhould be arayed in fine Linen, clean and white: For the fine Linen is the Righteouſneſs of the Saints.

9 And he ſaith unto me, Write, Bleſſed are they which are called unto the Marriage-Supper of the Lamb. And he ſaith unto me, Theſe are the true Sayings of God.

10 And I fell at his Feet to worſhip him; and he ſaid unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy Fellow-ſervant, and of thy Brethren, that have the Teſtimony of Jeſus; worſhip God: For the Teſtimony of Jeſus is the Spirit of Prophecy.

It is enquired here, Whether *v.* 8. belongs to the former Thankſgiving, or not? I think, it needs be no hot Diſpute, which ever Side of the Queſtion is taken; tho', to ſpeak my Mind in the Matter, I take it to be a new Purpoſe, and that it is to be lookt upon as the Voice which came from about the Throne, *v.* 5. and of which Speaker we hear again, *v.* 9. and is an Explication of the laſt Clauſe of the Song. Yet I own, it will break no Squares, to allow it to conſtitute a Part of that Praiſe; and therefore I proceed to take it up in theſe Parts following; 1. An Explication of the laſt Clauſe of

v. 7.

v. 7. *His Wife hath made herſelf ready*, v. 8. 2. A Charge given *John*, to commit theſe Things to Writing, *v.* 9. 3. The Apoſtle's Miſtake, and the Rectification thereof, *v.* 10.

I. There is an Explication of the Bride's having made herſelf ready, *To her was granted, or given, that ſhe ſhould be arayed*, &c. *v.* 8. If Expoſitors could agree, there appears little Difficulty from the Words; for theſe run eaſy enough. But we are obliged to look a little into the Thoughts of others, which I may ſafely range in two Claſſes;

Thoſe who underſtand this whole Paſſage of a State of Glory, as they do alſo ſeveral other Parts of this Prophecy, againſt all Senſe and Reaſon: The Meaning of theſe is, After Believers are admitted to Heaven, which they make without Ground the *Nuptials of the Lamb*, they are mantled with unmixed Glory, the immediate Conſequent of the Marriage which is pointed at in this Verſe. I own, this tells well enough; but there is a Strait they have not conſidered, how to knit the Glory of departed Saints in this Part of the Chapter, with the glorious *Conqueſts* of embodied Saints in the following Part thereof. It is to be ſure a moſt unjuſtifiable Skip, from the Perfection of Glory in Heaven, to the victorious State of the Church on Earth. I find a late Writer, Mr. *Marck*, tho' he has followed this Whim all along, owns here it may very well agree to the Kingdom of Grace; and yet is not pleaſed to offer one Reaſon, why it ſhould be rather applied to the State of Glory. All the Ground I find given for it, is, That it is ſubjoined to the *Marriage*, tho' they have not proven but the Marriage may be in Time: Their main Fortreſs lies in the Conjunction καὶ, which, they ſay, declares this Garment to be beſtowed after Marriage. It would be loſt Time to enquire in how many Senſes this little Word is taken, tho' in a great many Places it is owned by all to be redundant. It is enough for our Purpoſe to remark it is taken ſometimes in a caſual Senſe, as when *Eliſabeth* ſaid to *Mary*, Luke i. 42. *Bleſſed art thou among Women, and bleſſed is the Fruit of thy Womb.* Where, 'tis evident, the Reaſon why *Mary* was pronounced *bleſſed*, was becauſe the *Fruit* of her Womb was ſo.

Others apply this to the militant Church; yet they are not all of one Mind: Some tell us, They were all to be aray'd in *white Veſts*, like the *Prieſts* under the Old Teſtament, which at beſt is but a weak Fetch to ſupport the Honour of *Lawn-ſleeves* and *Surplices*, of which we may ſpeak afterwards. Others again have a Struggle, whether this ſhould be meant of the imputed or inherent Righteouſneſs. I think theſe Debates may be eaſily compoſed; for there is no Deſign in this Viſion to diſtinguiſh betwixt two ſuch abſolutely neceſſary Graces, but to preſent us with the Emblem of the Perſon honoured with both: For, tho' *Juſtification* and *Sanctification* be diſtinct, yet they are always united in the Perſon *juſtified*; which I take to be the true Senſe of the Words, and will appear more plainly when we view them in their Parts; As, 1. The Marriage or Wedding-garment of Chriſt's Spouſe. 2. How ſhe came by it. 3. The rational Explication of both.

1. The Church's Garment, *arayed in fine Linen, clean and white.* This is a diſtinct Colour from the Garb of the Whore, *Chap.* xvii. 4. who is ſaid to be *clothed in Purple and Scarlet.* It is true, ſhe gives out herſelf to have this *fine Linen* to diſpoſe of among other Things, *Chap.* xviii. 12. where *fine Linen* is among her Commodities: Bu that this is ſo, we have only her own Word, and the Opinion of her blind Followers. That *Juſtification* is to be meant here, is plain from the Account of the Saints, *Chap.* vii. 14. *They have waſhen their Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb*; And therefore the Apoſtle ſays, *Rom.* xiii. 14. *Put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* This is no leſs true of *Sanctification*: For as the *Blood of Chriſt* waſheth away the Guilt of Sin; ſo his *Spirit* removes the *Filth*, and breaks the Dominion of it; therefore the *Spirit* in Scripture comes ſo often under the Deſignation of *Water*, and *Purifying*: And the *Apoſtle* calls the whole of Sanctification a Garment, *Col.* iii. 10. *Put on the new Man, which is renewed in Knowledge, after the Image of him that created him.* That this is meant of Holineſs, is plain from what is added, *v.* 12. *Put on therefore, as the Elect of God, holy and beloved, Bowels of Mercies, Kindneſs, Humbleneſs of Mind.* The Properties of this Raiment are alſo very notable; 1. *Large*; ſo they are arayed, or ſurrounded, or wrapt about with it. This Garment went from Top to Toe. 2. *Clean*, or purged, or without Spot. This will not ſay that the Saints can arrive at the utmoſt Pitch of Holineſs: But this is to diſtinguiſh it from the Holineſs of Hypocrites, which is unpurged; yea, and of Moraliſts, who have all their Luſt mixed therewith. 3. It is *white* or gliſtering, or *pellucide*; which ſhews the Simplicity and Integrity of the Saints: There is no falſe Waſh or Paint here; all is true Simplicity and Sincerity.

2. The Way how ſhe came by it, *To her was granted that ſhe ſhould be arayed.* This Word is both in the *Paſſive* and *Preterite*; and ſays two Things, 1. It was be-

stowed on her; she did not make it, or buy it: Nay, in the Sense of our Proverb, *Christ took a Wife and bought a Gown to her*. I am surprised to find a learned Writer urge from this, We cannot mean Sanctification by this Raiment, because it is said, *It was given to her*, as the Words may be well rendred: As if Sanctification or inherent Holiness were not as much the Gift of God as Justification. Is it not said, *We are his Workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good Works*? Eph. ii. 10. This also is absolutely true of the Habits of Holiness, and is owned by all who plow not with *Arminius*'s Heifer: And it is even as true of the Fruits and Effects of these Habits, as our Lord says, *John* xv. *Without me ye can do nothing*. Nor may we restrain this to the Efficacy of Faith that varnisheth over our Works; it must be extended to the very Acts themselves, as we have it, *Philip.* ii. 14. *It is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good Pleasure*. 2. She had it before; it is not consequential to the Marriage, as they would have it; it is really that State of Readiness she was in, and therefore it is given as the Reason of her being ready; because it was given to her, otherwise she could never be ready. All these Scriptures adduced on Verse 7. make out this: And therefore I think it more just to make this Verse the Words of the Speaker before and after named, than the Voice of the Church: Yet I will not refuse but the Church will readily own all her Trimming to be freely bestowed upon her.

3. We have the Explication of both, which contains the Ground: *For the fine Linen is the Righteousness of the Saints*. I have but one Thought to examine here, which I do the rather, that our *Ceremony-mongers* hug themselves with the happy Invention of their great Champion. Their Sense in short is this, This *fine Linen* is the *Temple-Ordinance of God*; that is, God ordered all the Priests to be clothed with it. Tho' *Hamond* be generally celebrated for this quaint Thought, yet I would tell his Party, He is beholden to a *high-flying Papist* for it, but not on this Place: But my Business is not with Persons, but Principles. In brief, both contend, δικαιώματα signifies neither imputed nor inherent Righteousness, but an Observation of such *Ordinances*, as are not in their Nature *Moral*, and no further binding than as they are fortified by *Divine Authority*: The grand Proof of this they fetch from these Words, *Rom.* viii. 4. *That the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us*, &c. *q. d. That Circumcision*, &c. *appointed by* Moses, *might be done by us in a higher Manner*: Than which, none but a Papist could be guilty of a greater Blunder; for the Ceremonial Law was fulfilled by Christ. But that is not the Meaning of the Text, which speaks only of that *Righteousness* in which Man must stand before God, which is the plain Scope of the whole Chapter: And so can neither be *Ceremonies*, nor *Moral Performances* on our Part signified by them; for the whole Strain of the Apostle is to establish the *imputed* Righteousness of Christ, a Doctrine both *Hamond* and his Friend are Enemies to. The plain Sense of this then is, that this *white Linen* is the Emblem of all that Righteousness necessary to constitute a Saint: For to imagine them *Saints* before they got it, would be a very odd Way of Reasoning; as this same Prophet saith, *He that doth Righteousness is righteous, even as God is righteous*. So that the Exercise of *Faith* and *Holiness* do constitute a Saint.

II. A Charge given *John*, to commit these Things to Writing; where we enquire, 1. Who gave this Order. 2. What the Order is. 3. The Ground thereof.

1. Who gave the Order, *He saith unto me*. The Throng of Expositors think this was an *holy Angel*: But here he does not so much as say, this Speaker was an Angel. Some think it was that Angel was sent to him from Christ, *Chap.* i. 1. Others, that Angel which carried him to the *Wilderness*, Chap. xvii. 3. Yet I am ready to think, had it been any of these, or yet any other Angel had spoke to him before, he would have known him, and not offered to worship him. If it be said, The Apostle speaks of him as one well known, because he brings him in under the *Demonstrative* Particle ὅ: I answer, This is false; for it is λέγει, without any Particle prefix'd: And therefore I find, the most thinking render it impersonally, *It was said*; And the Reason is plain, because he knew not who it was. And what Appearance, is not said; tho' from the next Verse we are sure he was one of the Spirits of just Men made perfect, but he knew not of it when he got the Orders.

2. The Order itself, *Write, Blessed are they who are called to the Marriage-Supper of the Lamb*. To understand the whole of this, we must have Recourse to that Passage, *Chap.* xiv. 13. *Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord*, &c. where it is said, He heard a Voice, but saw nothing at the Time; yet afterwards, *v.* 14. *He saw One like unto the Son of Man*. Now, it is very presumable, that here, tho' he heard the Voice, he had but a most imperfect View of any Speaker; but receiving such a Command as before, which he had Reason to believe was from his old Master, he might think the same now, and so be ready to pay him all due *Respect*. The first Command was upon the

the Back of the ſuffering State of the Church, and this amidſt her Victories: So that the Apoſtle may be eaſily excuſed for this Miſtake; Nor indeed is he condemned for it, tho' he was diſcharged. I have explained, above, all the Terms in this Order, except the ſe two, *viz.*

(1.) The Character of theſe Perſons proclaim'd bleſſed, *viz. Called*; which to be ſure we are not to take in the ſame Senſe with the Invitation in the Parable, *Mat.* xxii. 3. where we find all were not worthy that were honoured with that Call: But here this *Call* will be *effectual*, and ſo it points at the great Influence of the *Goſpel* at that Time, and that they to whom the Word comes will certainly comply therewith; And ſo they are *Choſen* as well as *Called*, and will prove *faithful*, Chap. xvii. 14.

(2.) To what they are invited, *to the Marriage-Supper*. This gives Birth to a Struggle about the Difference betwixt *Dinner* and *Supper*: The firſt they take to be pointed at in the Parable, *Mat.* xxii. 4. *I have prepared my Dinner*, which they think fell out about the Mid-day of the World; And that there is a Change from *Dinner* to *Supper*, is, becauſe this will fall out about the End of the World. Yet, even allowing all this, it will be found to be long before the Morning of the Reſurrection, and ſo cannot anſwer their Deſign who make this reſpect a State of Glory. However, I find, when a *Marriage-Feaſt* is ſpoken of, *Dinner* and *Supper* ſeem to ſignify the ſame Thing; as, *Luke* xiv. 12. *When thou makeſt a Dinner, or a Supper*: Which afterwards is turned by one Word, *v.* 13. *When thou makeſt a Feaſt*. So that, if we ſhould go too near the Words, we might be ſuſpected to rub ſo hard on them, as bring from them what they never meant. Beſides, ſome well-vers'd in the Idiom of the *Greek*, tell us, That *Dinner* and *Supper* are but different Names for the ſame Thing: Others who are more exact aſſure us, a Feaſt is called *Dinner*, ἄριστον, not from the Time of eating, but from the Nature of the *Fare*, viz. of *the beſt* and *moſt palatable Diſhes*; and that it is called δεῖπνον from the *Seaſon* wherein they eat it, becauſe in theſe Eaſtern Countries they kept their moſt ſplendid Entertainments towards *Evening*, becauſe of the exceſſive Heat at Mid day.

3. The Ground of this Command, *He ſaith unto me, Theſe are the true Sayings of God*. It is plain we cannot reſtrict this to the foregoing Saying, for that is but one, and the whole Song conſiſts but of few; and therefore we may allow this to extend to all before, at leaſt in this Viſion, from the Beginning of *Chap.* xvii. and ſtretch itſelf to what follows. Nor can I refuſe to join theſe who contend this is an Argument we are not to apply this Context to the *triumphant Church*; for they, upon their Admiſſion to that happy State, are put without the Reach of all Doubts: But theſe Words ſeem deſign'd to remove Scruples that may perplex the Minds of ſuch as are in this Valley of Tears. It is true, they rejoin here, This is ſpoke to the *militant Church*, but concerns her in a *triumphant Condition*; and ſo it is as much as to tell her, her true Comfort is reſerved till ſhe come to the higher Houſe. But then I would enquire, When, and by whom it is delivered to the wreſtling Saints? They muſt ſay, By the Apoſtle in the Words of this Prophecy, in all Ages of the Church to the End of the World: And then it will not ply to the foregoing Expreſſions, that *the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made herſelf ready*; *and to her was given*, &c. For here the Comfort is adminiſtrate long before the Time; and if the Time of the *Lamb's Marriage* be after the Reſurrection, how can it be true ſo many Ages before? Or, if this cannot take Place till the actual Solemnization of the Marriage, then, according to them, the Church is in Heaven, where they will find *all the Sayings of God to be true*, without any other Avoucher but that of Experience, and will need no Writing.

III. The *Apoſtle's* Miſtake, and Rectification thereof, *v.* 10. I own there is too much ſaid on this Verſe, and a great many are at no ſmall Pains to accuſe the *beloved Diſciple* of *Idolatry*, and to fix the Crime upon him: I wiſh more Tenderneſs were uſed, where the Grounds are ſo narrow; but the natural Senſe of the Words will be the beſt Apology can be offered, where we have, 1. His Deed. 2. The Check. 3. The Reaſons of it.

1. The Apoſtle's Deed, *I fell at his Feet to worſhip him*. I allow this to be a religious Worſhip, and a Piece of Devotion due only to God, elſe it had not been culpable; for *Civility* is ever allowable to all, moſt juſt from Inferiors to Superiors, and moſt reaſonable amongſt Equals, yea, and beautiful as well as dutiful, from Superiors to Inferiors; and which none, without Incivility, can reject or neglect: And yet I am not convinced this will bring in the Apoſtle guilty of *Idolatry*; for the moſt we can make of it is a Miſtake, which, tho' a Sin, is far from this alledged Guilt: For, who is not liable to Miſtakes? Nor will this Faint juſtify *implicite Worſhip*, and ſay, that then the *Idolatry* of the *Papiſts* cannot be damnable. This, were it purſued, would carry us out into a large Field, which we have not either Leiſure or Inclination to inſiſt on,

further than to mention a few Things: 1. When the Intention is upright, and the Acts agreeable to the Deſign, the Miſtake of the Object, from an invincible Ignorance, does in a great Meaſure extenuate the Deed, and makes it leſs ſinful both in the Sight of God and in itſelf, which is plainly the Caſe here; And that eſpecially on this Suppoſition, If there had been no Miſtake, the Duty would be both neceſſary and laudable. I could give Examples, but I am ſure this will on no Account meet with the Idolatry of either *Papiſts* or *Heathens*, to extenuate their Sin: And yet it muſt be owned, that even amongſt them they are leſs criminal, who out of pure groſs Ignorance are led away to theſe Vanities, than ſuch as have more Knowledge, or better Opportunities of being rightly informed. 2. If among a Number of Perſonages who all deſerve Reſpect and Honour at our Hands, yet only one of them the higheſt and moſt diſtinguiſhing Degree of it, when the Manifeſtation is leſs plain and diſtinguiſhing; This may plead Excuſe for a Blunder, when otherwiſe the Perſon doing Homage, had no Deſign to rob the moſt Excellent of his Due, and diſpoſe of it to another. As if a Perſon ſhould be in a Place where he believed a King was preſent, but not being diſtinguiſhed from ſome other, ſhould fall into that Blunder, as pay that Reſpect to a Fellow-ſubject was only due to the Sovereign; This certainly is excuſable, and indeed it is the very Caſe here. 3. When an Action is well meant, but, by a Miſtake of the Object, wrong directed; if the Perſon, upon the firſt Information, give over and deſiſt, this muſt be a notable Alleviation of the Guilt: This alſo was plainly the Caſe here. And yet ſome think, without any Injury done the Text, a ſofter Meaning might remove the whole Difficulty, if we could allow this Proſtration to be no Act of Divine Worſhip, but a Piece of civil Reſpect paid by one of an inferior Order, to one of a ſuperior; and here the Angel or Speaker rejects it out of Condeſcenſion. But I own I cannot join this, tho' it be the Thought of a good Man; becauſe it is added in this ſame Text, *Worſhip God*; which to me ſays plainly, It was a Divine Worſhip both deſigned by the Apoſtle, and in this Senſe the Angel (or what we will) took it, and therefore checkt him. Which brings to the ſecond.

2. The Check, *See thou do it not*, originally, *See not*; where the Perſon indeed very honeſtly refuſeth what *John* offered, and does it in a very grave and ſhort Way. The firſt Expreſſion is *See*. Till this Time it is more than probable *John* did not clearly ſee the Speaker; and now that he diſcovers himſelf, it is ſufficient to undeceive the Apoſtle. The ſecond Word, *not*, comes well in upon the firſt, *q. d.* When now you ſee me, you will find there is no Reaſon for what you deſigned; for I am not that Angel who delivered the laſt Orders to you of this Nature, who alſo diſcovered himſelf afterwards, *Chap.* xiv. 13, 14. This, in my Opinion, is but a gentle Check, and not a rugged Reproof, as a great many contend.

3. The Reaſons of this Check, from theſe Topicks;

(1.) From the Angel's Quality, *I am thy Fellow-ſervant*; which no doubt was his greateſt Honour, tho' he were really an *Angel*. But in my Opinion it ſays he was none, but one of the *Redeemed*; but whether an *Apoſtle* or a private *Chriſtian*, is not ſaid. But, which ever of them he was, it is plain he was then in *Glory*: And tho' his State was changed, his Heart for God, and Zeal for his Intereſt and People, is the ſame.

(2.) From his Relation to *John*, *I am of thy Brethren that have the Teſtimony of Jeſus*; or, as ſome render it, *From among thy Brethren which hold the Teſtimony of Jeſus*. It is not in my Judgment poſſible to apply this to an Angel; for tho' they are Fellow-ſervants, and in ſome Senſe Brethren to Believers, yet they cannot be ſaid to be Brethren to theſe who hold the Teſtimony of Jeſus, who are certainly the *Elect*. Of this Character I ſpoke on *Chap.* vi. 9. and *Chap.* xii. 17.

(3.) From the true Object of all Devotion, *Worſhip God*. Where it is plain this Saint took *falling down at his Feet*, or Proſtration, to be an *Equivalent* to Worſhip; and did recommend to our *Apoſtle*, and in him to all the *Church*, that they ſhould reſerve that to God, he being the ſole Object of all religious Worſhip.

(4.) *The Spirit of Prophecy is the Teſtimony of Jeſus*. I am nowiſe ſtraitned about this, whether we allow it to be a new Reaſon, or a Ground of the former; and as little about the Senſe of it: For if, by *Prophecy*, we mean to foretell Things to come, then the *Spirit* of *Prophecy* is the Gift of it, which cannot be but in and from Jeſus Chriſt; and therefore this Speaker owns himſelf to have had it from Chriſt, and ſo knew nothing but as it was revealed to him. Or apply this nearer to the Worſhip of God, and the Underſtanding of Prophecy in the Goſpel-ſenſe, for the Preaching of Chriſt; the Senſe of it will be, The Life and Power of Preaching is the beſt Evidence or Witneſs of Chriſt's Preſence and Power: And by this he would carry off the Apoſtle, and by him all the Church, from uſeleſs Speculations, and lead him and them to the true and ſpiri-

tual

tual Worſhip of God through Chhriſt. Upon the whole, it ſhews what Care every one ſhould have, not only how they *worſhip*, but *whom they worſhip*, that they miſplace it not.

We proceed to the third Part of the Amplification of the *ſixth Vial*, from *v.* 11. to *v.* 20. which contains a new Viſion, all own, muſt belong to the *ſixth Vial*. In this we may obſerve, what was moſt inſiſted on in the Hiſtory of the Vial, is but lightly hinted at here: The Armies of *Babylon* were particularly accounted for, *Chap.* xvi. from *v.* 12. to *v.* 17. and are but touched at here: And as we had but a very ſhort and obſcure Account of Chriſt and his Army, the Antagoniſt of *Babylon*, here we have them at Length deſcribed; Where we are to notice theſe general Parts, 1. The Account of the great General that oppoſeth himſelf to *Babylon*, to *v.* 14. 2. An Account of his Armies, *v.* 15. 3. His Weapons, Atchievements, and diſtinguiſhing Badge, to *v.* 17. 4. A ſolemn Edict or Proclamation, *v.* 17, 18. 5. An Account of *Babylon* and her Armies, *v.* 19. Here alſo it may be noticed, the Spirit of God dwells on the Deſcription of the Church's General, and ſpeaks but ſhortly of the Army itſelf: The Reaſon is, the Succeſs depends intirely on him, and they are rather Witneſſes than Agents; yea, any Efficacy they have as Inſtruments, is owing allenarly to his Concurrence.

11 And I ſaw Heaven opened, and behold, a white Horſe, and he that ſat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in Righteouſneſs he doth judge and make War.

12 His Eyes were as a Flame of Fire, and on his Head were many Crowns; and he hath a Name written that no Man knew but he himſelf.

13 And he was clothed with a Veſture dipt in Blood, and his Name is called, The Word of God.

Here we have, after a ſhort Preface, a glorious Deſcription of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the great Captain of the Lord's Hoſt, in eight ſeveral Expreſſions, which we ſhall conſider as they are ranged in the Text.

There is a *Preface* premiſed to the Deſcription of Chriſt, which tells us where the *Viſion* was diſplayed, but not where *John* was; for we read not of his being caught up there: Yea, it is probable *John* continued in the *Wilderneſs* where the *Angel* carried him; but certainly he was ſo poſted, that he could obſerve what paſſed in *Heaven* or the *Church*, and what paſſed in *Babylon*'s Army on Earth. *I ſaw Heaven opened*, that is, to give him the clearer *Diſcovery* of the Manifeſtation. From this, ſome think, we are here to expect a brief Recapitulation of all, from *Chap* xii. to this Place, becauſe there we read of an Engagement betwixt *Michael* and the *Dragon*. It muſt be owned the *Combatants* are the ſame in both Places, with theſe *Differences*, that *Chap.* xii. diſcovers only the *Dragon* engaging *Chriſt* and his Army; but here, together with him, both the *Beaſts* mentioned *Chap.* xiii. ſo that the *Engagements* differ. Again, in that firſt Encounter, the Forces of the *Lamb* did indeed foil the *Dragon*, tho' with much Bloodſhed, for the Victory was with Difficulty; and the *Dragon* did recruit again, tho' in a new Shape: But here, all his Armies are totally routed, and ſhall never be able to rally, either under one Form or another, at leaſt for the *Space* of a *thouſand Years*. Others again make this a Viſion of *the Day of Judgment*. I am ſurprized to find learned Men make ſo many Emblems of the Day of the laſt Judgment in this Prophecy, ſeeing properly we have none but one, in *Chap.* xx. from *v.* 11. Beſides, it might be expected theſe *Gentlemen* would make the Parts of their *Scheme* hang better together; for they make the firſt of this Chapter to repreſent the glorified State of the Church *above*, which can only take Place after the Day of Judgment, and yet here they bring in the *laſt Judgment* after it: Nor can they extricate themſelves from this Difficulty, by telling us, That the *Order* of the *Narrative* does not determine the Order of Succeſſion; for this is to caſt the whole *Prophecy* looſe. If the *Spirit of God* has not in the Manifeſtation obſerved the *Order of Succeſſion*, where ſhall we meet with it? To be ſure not from them, till they bring better *Credentials* than we have ſeen; for they offer nothing but a naked Conjecture. Again, in the *laſt* Judgment, at leaſt immediately *before* it, will be an Union of all Souls and Bodies together, never to be ſeparate; but in this War there is a great Slaughter, which plainly declares the Separation of Souls from Bodies. Finally, we have not one Word here that ſeems to reſpect the general Judgment, except that one Clauſe, *v.* 11. *In Righteouſneſs doth he judge and make War*;

War; the Senſe whereof we ſhall eſtabliſh when we come to the Words, and it will appear it does not ſerve their Turn. But then it may be enquired, What is the Meaning of this prefatory Viſion, *I ſaw Heaven opened*? I anſwer, *John ſaw a Door in Heaven opened*, Chap. iv. 1. which ſhewed Acceſs to God, tho' not ſo ample as afterwards: And, *Chap.* xi. ult. *The Temple was opened* upon the ſounding of the *ſeventh Trumpet*, which made larger Acceſs: But here, upon the pouring out of the *ſixth Vial*, Heaven itſelf is opened; which ſeems to ſay, That at the firſt the *Door* would give Acceſs to particular Perſons, the Opening of the Temple to Multitudes, but here the Work of God will be manifeſt to all, and all the World will be brought in, that are not deſtroyed under this and the *ſeventh Vial*. We come now to view the *Captain-General*, in theſe ſeveral Particulars, according to the Text;

1. He is deſcribed from his *Horſe*, called here *a white Horſe*. Of this we heard before, *Chap.* vi. 2. at the Opening of the *firſt Seal*: Nor can I take it in another Senſe here than there, and ſo it is an Emblem of the Goſpel and its Propagators. I cannot go in with theſe, who would have this *white Horſe* to ſignify ſome other Thing, upon theſe Grounds, We have another Deſcription of the *Rider*, and there are *other Effects*. As to the *1ſt*, It is owned there is here a fuller Account of the Rider than in the other Place: Yet there is nothing ſaid in this, which croſſeth that; and themſelves own generally, it is the ſame *Rider* diverſly deſcribed. As to the *2d*, The Conſequents or Effects are indeed different, becauſe they relate to different Periods; the firſt to the Beginning of the *Goſpel-church*, the other to the *Perfection* of it; yet ſo, as ſtill theſe Effects differ but in *Degree*. The laſt Reaſon I find againſt this Senſe, is, Becauſe all the *Seals* are to continue to the End of the World, and not to ceaſe till the End of the World, when they think they are to return to Heaven. I wiſh I could take their Meaning of this; for, if we have hit the Scope of the *Seals*, three of the Horſes are never to go to Heaven, but all of them to Hell, as we find in the Cloſe of this Chapter: Nor is it ſaid this *Horſe* did return Heaven. Now what hinders but that the Apoſtle ſhould have in Heaven a new Viſion of the further Propagation of the Goſpel upon Earth? which is all I take to be the Senſe of it here.

2. He is deſcribed from his Character, *He that ſate upon him, is called Faithful and True*. Theſe are Characters aſcribed to Chriſt, *Chap.* i. 5. *Chap.* iii. 7. and 14. where we explained them; the firſt may reſpect his *Promiſes*, and the other his *Threatnings*: We are ſure he will not diſappoint his People, nor neglect to puniſh his Enemies.

3. He is deſcribed from his Work, *In Righteouſneſs ſhall he judge and make War*. The Senſe of *Judging* is debated here, while ſome take it for a Retribution in general, whether of Rewards or Puniſhments, as we have it by the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* xcvi. 10. *He ſhall judge the People righteouſly*: v. 13. *And he ſhall judge the World with Righteouſneſs, and the People with his Truth*. Others again ſay, This Judging reſpects his Denunciations againſt his Enemies; and his making War, to point at the Execution thereof. I ſee no Ground of Controverſy here; for, at the ſame Time he pleads his Peoples Cauſe, he puniſheth their Enemies. However, from this laſt, we may ſee we are not thereby to mean the laſt Judgment; for therein Chriſt is not repreſented as a *Warrior*, but as a *Judge* with great *Power* and *Glory*: But here, there is great Terror to his Enemies, which will iſſue in their Deſtruction. It ſeems ludicrous, what ſome ſay of this *making War*, That it is with Alluſion to great *Marriages* among the *Romans*, and other Nations, at which they had *Warlike Revels*, as *Liſting*, *Juſtling*, &c. For I have ſhewed before, that the Spirit of God borrows no Emblems from his Enemies. And beſides, this is to be no Mock-fight, as all theſe *Tournaments* were; for this will be in hot Earneſt, and that the Enemies of the Church ſhall feel: But this ſeems to be added here, to diſtinguiſh betwixt this War, and moſt others, that it will be *in Righteouſneſs* and *pure Juſtice*; whereas the Wars that *Babylon* was moſt active in, were moſt *unjuſt*.

4. He is deſcribed from his Eyes, *v.* 12. *His Eyes were as a Flame of Fire*. We had this applied to Chriſt, *Chap.* i. 14. *Chap.* ii. 18. where I explained it; the ſame Senſe is to take Place there. Only here, while his Eyes are compared to *a Flame of Fire*, it may note his Anger and Indignation againſt his Enemies, and to tell us he will kill them with his *very Looks*: Then it is they will have Reaſon to call to the Rocks to fall on them, and hide them from the Wrath of the *Lamb*; for his *ireful Looks* will fill them with extreme *Horrour*, and *Terror*.

5. From what is *myſterious* in his Deſignation, *He had a Name written, which no Man knew but he himſelf*. This in Sound is like what we had, *Chap.* ii. 17. *In the Stone a new Name written, which no Man knoweth but he that receiveth it*. But, to be ſure, this is not that *Name* above ſaid; yet, from what is ſaid there of that Name, we may come to ſome Knowledge of this, tho' certainly the *Names* muſt differ, as much as the *Perſons* that

that have them. I cannot go in with many Thoughts about this; as, That by this we are to understand the Name *Jehovah*; and that it is said to be written, is because we have it in the Scripture, and because of the hot Disputes about the *Points* of this Word amongst the Learned; it is said, *No Man knew it but himself.* I imagine this Text is not designed to encourage, or determine in these *Grammatical* Squables; for, whatever is to be said about the *Punctation* of that Word, we know it is one of the *incommunicable Names* of God; and this is some Knowledge of it. Much less must they be right, who tell us, This is taken from the *Custom* of the *Heathen*, who had *mysterious Names* to their Deities, for these *Idols* know nothing: Besides, I think it the greatest Unjustice, to imagine God would borrow the *Mysteries* about himself, from the forged *Mysteries* among the *Heathen.* I think a *Papist* speaks more modestly than these Protestants, who tells us, This *Name* coming in with the Mention of Crowns, has an Allusion to the *Levitical High Priests*, who had a *Motto* upon their *Head* which was legible; but this, to shew the the Excellency of the *great High Priest*, has a *Motto* which none knows but himself: But here we have not the Emblem of Christ as *Priest*, but as *King*; and so this will not meet either. As little can I believe *Name* to be some secret *Ticket*, or *Note* for his *Reward*, which is groundless. No doubt this has Allusion to many Passages of Scripture where we read of something *mysterious* and unfathomable in the Character of God; as, *Judg.* xiii. 18. *Why askest thou thus after my Name, seeing it is secret?* Prov. xxx. 4. *What is his Name? or what is his Son's Name, if thou canst tell?* In both which Places, *Name* is to be understood of his *Nature* and *Perfections*; for this same Reason his *Name* is called *Wonderful*, Isa. ix. 6. And therefore Christ saith of himself, *Matth.* xi. 27. *None knoweth the Son, but the Father.* So that we may take in here, his *Divine Nature, inexpressible Generation*, and all his *Mediatorial Perfections*, which are incomprehensible by any of the Creatures; and that it is said to be written, is to shew the *Indeliableness* thereof: So that there is an *Analogy* betwixt this Name, and the Name of his Saints.

6. He is described from the *Ornament* of his *Head, On his Head were many Crowns.* There was but one *Crown* given him, when he went out first on this *white Horse*; but, on his *next Appearance*, he has many *Crowns*: It is not said, like the *Dragon*, he had *seven*, as *Chap* xii. 3. nor *ten*, like the *Beast*, Chap. xiii. 1. much less *two*, like the other Beast, *Chap.* xiii. 11. but *many*, to shew he had made a very successful Expedition, and got himself great *Renown*, and *Honour*, and *Victory*, and *Glory*; for all the Nations of the Earth will become his Kingdoms, and all their Kings his Subjects; and that he was deservedly called *King of Kings*, as afterwards: We have something to countenance this elsewhere, when *David* conquered the *Ammonites*, it is said, 2 *Sam.* xii. 30. *And he took their King's Crown, and it was seton* David's *Head.*

7. From his *Garments*, v. 13. *He was clothed with a Vesture dipt in Blood.* The Garment to be understood here, is properly the uppermost and largest. Many understand this of the *Blood of Christ*, that the *Vesture* was *dipt in*; and therefore they take this to be an Emblem of his *Priestly Office.* So much of this must be owned as Truth, that all the Victories Christ and his Church gain over their Enemies, is by vertue of his *own Blood*; for, by the shedding of it, he purchased a Power to defeat all his Enemies. In this Capacity we had him represented, *Chap.* v. 6. *A Lamb as he had been slain.* Yet here I cannot think this is to be meant of his *own*, but of the Blood of his *Enemies*: His Blood was indeed first shed, but when that Time comes, he will make them pay for it; which has a manifest Respect to that Passage of *Isaiah*, Chap. lxiii. 1, 2, 3. *Who is this that cometh from* Edom, *with dyed Garments from* Bozrah? *This that is glorious in his Apparel, travelling in the Greatness of his Strength? I that speak in Righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine Apparel, and thy Garments like him that treadeth in the Wine-fat? I have troden the Wine-press alone, and of the People there was none with me: For I will tread them in mine Anger, and trample them in my Fury, and their Blood shall be sprinkled upon my Garments, and I will stain all my Raiment.* I own, some understand this Passage of Christ's Priestly Office; but the plain Words of the Text reject this, especially *v.* 3. where it is said, *I will trample them*, &c. whence it is evident, it was the Blood of his *Enemies*, and not his *own.* Nor are we to think this *Vesture* was of a bloody Colour, to foretel what he was to do; but it was stained with the Blood shed in former Engagements, under the former *Vials*; he was new come from Slaughter, and going on in it, and will not cease till he make a compleat End: Which plainly says, there will not be long Time betwixt the Vials; and *Babylon* will have but little if any Respite. I am also of the Mind, this carries the whole Emblem off from the Day of Judgment. I know a learned Author, of late, makes himself merry with this Argument, alledging, Blood is not to be meant literally here, but to be taken for Destruction to all Eternity; and urges

the last Verse of this Chapter; *That the Beast and the false Prophet will be cast into the Lake*, i. e. into *Hell*. This Reason seems to me not very cogent; for we are not to think that the Garments of Christ will be really *bedaubed* with their *Blood*, yet we are to believe their Blood will be spilt, yea, and his mystical Body the Saints may have the Enemies Blood upon their *Vestures*. Nor do I see any Inconsistency betwixt their temporal Death, and eternal Damnation; for this may follow hard upon the Back of that.

8. He's described from his known Character, *His Name is called the Word of God*. This is a Name Christ comes often under in Scripture, *Psal.* xxxiii. 6. *By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Host of them by the Breath of his Mouth*. Where also his *Eternal Generation* (as One observes) is pointed at, and in many other Places the Learned have found it. It is a very ordinary Designation given our Lord by this *Apostle*, both in his *Gospel* and *Epistles*, and in this *Prophecy*; which is a Topick used by severals, proving *John* to be the *Penman* of this *Prophecy*. Nor does this Name want Abundance of Reasons to support it; as, 1. Christ is the only *Interpreter* of the Mind and Will of God to Mankind. 2. He is the great *Argument* and Subject of the written Word. 3. He is the great *Accomplishment* and Fulfiller of the Word of God. 4. He expresseth the very *Person* of the *Father*, as the Words of the Mouth do express the Thoughts of the Heart: And so all this Character belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ.

14 And the Armies which were in Heaven followed him upon white Horses, clothed in fine Linen, white and clean.

In this Account of his Army, we observe these few Things:

1. Their general Designation, *Armies*. We had the Word *Army*, Chap. ix. 16. where I shewed it properly signifies a *martial* and *well-disciplin'd* Multitude; only there it is in the *singular* Number, but here in the *plural*; so that these must be a great deal more numerous than those: Nor do I see how we can make them any other than these we heard were imployed in praising God, *v.* 6. so that they can use both their Tongues and Hands to the best Purpose. One Army is many a Time too much for several *Generals*; yet this great Leader has many Armies, whom he knows well how to manage, as they know how to obey.

2. Their Distinction from all other Armies, *which were in Heaven*; or rather, *which are in Heaven*. The Addition of this Clause moves many to take all these for *Angels*, frequently called in Scripture, the *Lord's Hosts*, or Armies; as *Gen.* xxxii. 2. *When* Jacob *saw the Angels of God, he said, It is the Lord's Hosts, and he called the Name of the Place* Mahanaim, *i. e.* two Hosts or Armies. And, when *Micajah* prophesied against *Ahab*, 1 Kings xxii. 19. he said, *I saw the Lord sitting upon his Throne, and all the Hosts of Heaven standing by him, on his Right-hand, and on his Left*. Now, tho' we should allow all these to be Angels in the Type, it will not follow that *Angels* are thereby represented. We have proven, this Context does not respect the *last Judgment*, but the *Destruction* of *Babylon*; and therefore they can only signify these Saints that follow the *Lamb*'s Banner of Righteousness: And so, in Reason, we must take them for these we read of, *Chap.* xvii. 14. *They that are with him*, [the Lamb] *are Called, and Faithful, and Chosen*. Who are none else but these *Kings, who shall hate the Whore, and burn her Flesh with Fire*, with their Armies. They are called *Armies in Heaven*, which was *literally* true as to the Place of the Vision, and will be no less *significatively* so, when the Vision is fulfilled; not only because they will be moved and directed by Heaven, but also that the Heavens are an Emblem of the Church on Earth.

3. Their March, *they followed him*. Some say, They did not follow him to fight, but to make up his Train, and increase his Pomp; which, they think, two Things in the Text justifies: 1. That they are clothed in White, which is not the Garb of a Warriour. 2. We read not of their Weapons which no doubt he would have mentioned, if they had any Use for them. As for the first, their white Raiment is no sure Evidence they were not to fight; for their General's Garment was *white*, as we heard before it was dipt in Blood: Nor indeed does Blood appear so well on any other Colour, nor does any Thing more stain *White* than *Blood*. Besides, this white Raiment is no Sign they shall be harmless to their Enemies, but that they are righteous in themselves. As to the second, tho' they are not said to have such or such particular Weapons, yet thence it will not follow they had none at all: But it says, whatever their Weapons will be, their Victory will be more owing to their *Captain*, than their *Arms*. Finally, If they are not to fight, why are they called *Armies*, the proper Designation of a *war-*

warlike Rendezvouze? This is the more probative, that the Prophet is ſpeaking of them before Action.

4. Their *Equipage*, mounted *upon white Horſes*; No doubt, that they might be in their *Maſter's Livery*, and to aſſure us they will be ſuch as will make the Goſpel their greateſt Comfort and Support, and for which they will contend: It may be alſo to denote their Diſtinction from *Babylon's* Army, gathered by the hoarſe Croaking of the *unclean Spirits*, like *Frogs*. Whiteneſs points out the Righteouſneſs of their Cauſe; and that they ride upon *Horſes*, ſhews their Expedition.

5. Their Attire, *clothed in Linen, white and clean*. This is the Verification of that Grant, *v.* 8. of which we ſpoke at Length. The *Apoſtle* then ſaw them mounted, and to be ſure they will be a beautiful and gallant Army.

Some contend fiercely, This is not a *warlike Army*; and would have them to be *Triumphers*: And ſome would make them the whole glorified Church in Heaven; which, I humbly conceive, the Text will not warrant; But, on the Contrary, ſays, They are marching to the Field of Battle, with Aſſurance of *Victory*, which they cannot fail of, under the Conduct of ſuch a General as indeed ſtands in no Need of their Aſſiſtance, yet is graciouſly pleaſed to honour them with a Part of the Work, that they may have the more Satisfaction in the *Triumph*.

15 And out of his Mouth goeth a ſharp Sword, that with it he ſhould ſmite the Nations, and he ſhall rule them with a Rod of Iron: And he treadeth the Wine-preſs of the Fierceneſs and Wrath of Almighty God.
16 And he hath on his Veſture, and on his Thigh a Name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

Here we have the *General's* Weapons, Atchievements, and Badge of Honour.

I. His Weapons, which are two; a ſharp Sword, and a Rod of Iron.

1. His Sword, *Out of his Mouth goeth a ſharp Sword, that with it he ſhould ſmite the Nations*. Some contend, This is only to be meant of the Sword of his *Word* and *Spirit*, which is a merciful Weapon; And that the next is a *Weapon* of *Wrath* and Indignation: Others would have both *Inſtruments* of *Death*. How far either one or both of theſe are in the right, will be beſt known, when we conſider them ſeparately. Of the *Sword* we may from the Text remark,

(1.) It is called a *Sword*, the ſame Word we had and explain'd, *Chap.* i. 16. Only there it is called *a two-edged Sword*, as well as *ſharp*; here it is only ſaid to be *ſharp*, but not called *two-edged*. The Reaſon of this Turn of Expreſſion is alledged by ſome to be this, The *firſt Sword* ſignifies the *Goſpel*, but this is unmixed *Juſtice*. But, as I proved there, that both Mercy and Juſtice is comprehended in the Emblem of the *Sword*, ſo here I would have none of them excluded; For, it is charitable to believe, that, even at that Hour, ſome may be gained: I confeſs, the Text ſays nothing of it; Yet it is plain from the Parable of the *Vineyard*, Mat. xx. i. Nor do I think it a fair Expoſition, to make that Day, divided into twelve Hours, to have no other Senſe than a Relation to the Life of Man; it will do as well, to allow a Part of it to reſpect the Age of the World, and ſo this *ſixth Vial* will be the eleventh Hour, at which the Goſpel may be effectual for the Converſion of ſome, who had been deaf to all the Calls in the Trumpets and preceeding Vials. But then, it ſeems as reaſonable to believe, that all who then ſhall harden their Hearts againſt the Word of God, *will be deſtroyed ſuddenly, and that without Remedy*.

(2.) Whence this Sword comes, it *goeth out of his Mouth*. The ſame Phraſe is explain'd, *Chap.* i. 16. It ſhews the Eaſineſs of Chriſt's Conqueſts, either to ſubdue or deſtroy: If he ſpeak the Word, it is done; he can *ſpeak* his own *Army* into *Courage*, and his *Enemies* into an inſuperable *Damp*: *When he but look'd upon the Hoſt of* Pharaoh, *it was troubled*; And much more will *Babylon* be, when he ſpeaks to them in Wrath, and vexeth them in his hot Diſpleaſure, as we find in the next Clauſe, which,

(3.) Expreſſeth the Uſe the Sword will be put to, *That with it he might ſmite the Nations*, or, as ſome render it, *the* Heathen. There ſeems little Odds in theſe Words; nor will they, any Way underſtood, ſupport that Thought, That this is all pure and unmixed Wrath: Tho', as I ſaid, the Bulk of it may be Juſtice, yet I think we ſhould not intirely exclude Mercy. I own, the Word παταξω ſeems to import a *ſmiting in Wrath*, as find it uſed, *Mat.* xxvi. 31. *I will ſmite the Shepherd, and the Sheep ſhall be ſcattered*. Yet it muſt be owned, whatever Juſtice was in that Stroke, there was no leſs Mercy: Beſides, I am ſure it is taken in a friendly and merciful Manner in another

Place, *Acts* xii. 7. *The Angel of the Lord came upon him, and a Light ſhone in the Priſon, and he ſmote* Peter *on the Side, and ſet him up.* 'Tis true, we find in that ſame Chapter, *v.* 23. that *the Angel of the Lord ſmote* Herod *in Judgment*: So that, from the common Uſe of the Word, it may ſignify a *Smiting* either in *Judgment* or *Mercy*; and both may concur to make up the full Senſe of this. As for the Word rendred *Nations*, I own it to be the ſame with that, *Chap.* xi. 2. where it is ſaid, *The* Gentiles *were to trample under Foot the outer Court*; and is no doubt there to be taken for *Antichriſt* or *Babylon*: Yet I am as confident, there are a great many of *God's Elect* now, and there will be then, whom in due Time he will call by that Voice, *Chap.* xviii. 4. *Come out of her, my People.* Upon the Whole, we may take this *ſharp Sword* in the ſame Senſe we took the *two-edged Sword* before; and then the Import of it is, tho' there may be an Offer of Mercy, which ſome will comply with, yet there will be much of Juſtice in it.

2. The next Weapon is a Rod of Iron, *He ſhall rule them with a Rod of Iron*, or, *he ſhall feed them*, &c. for it is a *Metaphor* borrowed from *Shepherds*, and is many a Time rendred to *feed*; As, *John* xxi. 16. *Feed my Sheep.* We find it alſo rendred, and juſtly, to *rule*, Mat. ii. 6. *He ſhall rule my People* Iſrael: So that it may take in its Comprehenſion, both Mercy and Wrath. No doubt this is with Alluſion to the Words of the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* ii. 9. where a Promiſe is made to Chriſt, *Thou ſhalt break them as with a Rod of Iron, and daſh them in Pieces like a Potter's Veſſel.* Where, for the moſt Part, it is a wrathful Government; becauſe, tho' the *Verb* expreſſing the Exerciſe be mild, yet the Name pointing at the Inſtrument is hard: And when both are mixed, it plainly ſays, all theſe who ſhall not tamely ſubmit to the Word of the Truth of the Goſpel, will be broken in Pieces; And even ſome will be ſaved, *Jude* 23. *With Fear, pulling them out of the Fire*: But ſtill it will be Salvation, tho' it may be in a very forcible and violent Manner. We had a Touch at this, *Chap.* ii. 27. and *Chap.* xii. 5. ſo that here is a Mixture of both Juſtice and Mercy.

II. The Atchievement of this great Commander, *He treadeth the Wine-preſs of the Fierceneſs and Wrath of Almighty God.* We had an Expreſſion to this Purpoſe before, *Chap.* xiv. 20. where we gave the Senſe thereof, which cannot be much different here. Some contend, Both Paſſages point at the ſame Event; which I think by no Means ſhould be allowed, becauſe that belongs to the *ſixth Seal*, and this to the *ſixth Vial*: And, unleſs we confound the *Seals* and *Vials*, we may not venture upon ſuch a confuſed Way of explicating the *Myſteries* of this *Book*; Beſides, we have at Length before eſtabliſhed the Difference betwixt them. I ſhall own in the general, the two Paſſages are much a-kin to one another; But this will not make them preſently to be the ſame: And further, 'tis plain, both of them refer to *Babylon's Plagues*; yet the Difference is very obſervable in theſe Things, 1. That *Chap.* xiv. is none of the laſt *Plagues* upon *Babylon*, but among the firſt, which began under the *ſixth Seal*; whereas we are ſure this muſt appertain to the *laſt Plagues*, becauſe under the *ſixth Vial*. It may pleaſe the Spirit of God to repreſent to us different Emergents under the ſame Emblem, to engage us the more attentively to conſider the Things that are delivered to us in his Word. 2. That *Wine-preſs*, Chap. xiv. was trode *without* the City, for it did not touch the Conſtitution of *Babylon*; but this will be in it, yea, in the very *Heart* thereof; for the *fifth Vial* lighted upon the *Seat of the Beaſt*, and this comes nearer Home, for each of them are heavier than another. This we find to be the laſt of the Plagues, ſave one; yea, and but little will be left for the ſeventh to do, in Compariſon of what will be effectuate under the preceeding *Six*: Nay, in all Reaſon we may regard this as the Iſſue of that *great Battle* at *Armageddon*. 3. It is ſaid, *Chap.* xiv. that *Jeſus Chriſt* trode *that Wine-preſs without the City*, but not ſo this: Yet we are not to doubt but the Iſſue of the firſt did depend upon his Concurrence, no leſs than this; yet his Hand was not ſo viſible therein, as it will be here: Nor will the *Deſtruction* brought upon *Babylon* by the *firſt*, be near ſo great as what will befall her in *this*. Both theſe Expreſſions are borrowed from the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. lxiii. 3. of which we ſpoke on *v.* 13. Yet I cannot from all this ſee how this Paſſage ſhould concern the laſt *Judgment*, ſeeing all to be done here is the Deſtruction of *Babylon*, to make Way for the happy State of *Chriſt's Church* on Earth, of which we read afterwards, *Chap.* xx. and eſpecially *Chap.* xxi. Whereas it is ſaid to be *the Fierceneſs of the Wrath of God*, which they bring in as a Proof that they point both at the ſame Thing. Anſwer, We have the ſame Expreſſion, *Chap.* xvi. 19. yet they incline not to refer that and theſe two to the ſame Event, *i. e.* the *laſt Judgment*, but own the *ſeventh Vial* to be the laſt Stroke upon the Whore; and therefore ſo we are to underſtand this, ſeeing it is but the Amplification of the *ſixth Vial*.

III. The diſtinguiſhing Badge of Honour beſtowed upon this *great Chiftian*, v. 16. *He had on his Veſture*, &c. It is uſual for Perſons of Diſtinction, eſpecially at ſolemn Ap-

Appearances, to have ſomething about them to diſcriminate their Rank and Quality; and ſo it is with this great Warriour, who will not diſſemble himſelf under the Form of another, but diſcover to the World who he is: Where we note,

1. The general Character of this Badge, *a Name*; which, in the general, ſignifies a *Character* or *Deſignation*, deſcribing the Perſon, and diſtinguiſhing him from all others: Thus *Name* is taken by the Prophets, and aſcribed to God, *Iſa.* xlvii. 4. *The Lord of Hoſts is his Name.* And again, ſpeaking of Chriſt, *Jer.* xxiii. 6. *This is his Name, whereby he ſhall be called, The Lord our Righteouſneſs.* But this here in the Text is a very great Name, *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* 'Tis the very Name given him by the Apoſtle *Paul* long before, 1 *Tim.* vi. 15. *He is the bleſſed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* We had this ſame Expreſſion above, *Chap.* xvii. 14. where we explain'd it: But here we have it advanced with more Solemnity; For there it is only aſſerted of him, but in this Text it is *written* ſo of him, and he carries about this great and wonderful Character in a moſt viſible Manner.

2. Where he had this Name diſplayed, in two Places, *On his Veſture*; all by this underſtand his upper Garment, which is frequently rendred a Cloke in Scripture: And *on his Thigh*; This Word, we are told, is nowhere elſe to be met with in all the New Teſtament, nor are *Interpreters* agreed about its Meaning: Some thereby underſtand the *Scabbard* of the Sword, that hangs on the Thigh; as we read, *Pſal.* xlv. 3. *Gird thy Sword upon thy Thigh, O thou moſt Mighty.* I have no Doubt but our *Prophet* is here alluding to that; nor will the Objections brought againſt it overturn it, *viz.* That the large upper Garment would cover it, and ſo it ſhould not be ſeen; for ἱμάτιον is a *Diminutive* from ἕμα, and ſo it muſt ſignify a *little Garment*; and therefore our Tranſlators turn it a *Veſture*: So we read, that *Warriours* had a ſhort *Mantle* they were in Uſe to wear with their *Armour*, which did cover only to their Loins, that it might be no Impediment to them in their ſeveral Efforts. If our Apoſtle is alluding to ſuch a Garment, then any Thing might be ſeen upon the Thigh. Again, they object, The Name at this *Rate* muſt be twice written, once upon his Veſture, and another Time upon his Thigh: Whereas, if we would allow the Veſture to be large enough, and ſide or deep, then one Writing would anſwer the Turn. To this I reply, Seeing both the *Veſture* and *Thigh* are mentioned, we may either ſuppoſe one Part of the *Name* to be written above, on the *Veſture*, and the other *below*; Or, if we pleaſe, allow it fully to be written on both: I ſee no Squares will be broken thereby. However that be, the Import of this Part of the Emblem is moſt to be noted; his glorious *Atchievements* at that Period of the World, will then ſatisfy all, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that *Jeſus Chriſt* is the *only eternal Son of God*, and *Saviour of the World*: There will remain no more any Doubtings in the Minds of any Perſons; then will the *Socinian*, *Arian*, &c. be perfectly convinced, when his ſtrong *Arm* hath gotten him the *Victory* over all his *Enemies*.

3. The Way how this diſtinguiſhing Name is evident It is *written*; or, as ſome ſay, *engraven*; or, as others incline, *embroidered*: However that go, we are ſure two Things are wrapt up in it, 1. It will be *legible*, *He that runs may read it.* 2. *Indelible*, Devils and wicked Men ſhall not be able to cancel it. It is a *Name* then, and a *Honour* he will never loſe, but abide with him for his Glory, and be Matter of his Peoples Praiſe for ever and ever.

17 And I ſaw an Angel ſtanding in the Sun, and he cried with a loud Voice, ſaying to all the Fowls that fly in the Midſt of Heaven, Come and gather yourſelves together unto the Supper of the great God:

18 That ye may eat the Fleſh of Kings, and the Fleſh of Captains, and the Fleſh of mighty Men, and the Fleſh of Horſes, and of them that ſit on them, and the Fleſh of all Men, both Free and Bond, both Small and Great.

Here is a very ſolemn Proclamation, in a Strain very familiar to the old *Prophets*, from whoſe Words, and their Accompliſhment, we may be much helped to the Underſtanding of this Paſſage; as in *Ezek.* xxxix. 17, &c. *Thou Son of Man, thus ſaith the Lord God, Speak unto every feathered Fowl, and every Beaſt of the Earth, Aſſemble yourſelves together*, &c. *Ye ſhall eat the Fleſh of the Mighty, and drink the Blood of the Princes of the Earth.* The plain Senſe of all this we have afterwards, *Ezek.* xxxix. 21. *All the Heathen ſhall ſee my Judgment that I have executed, and my Hand that I have laid upon them.* All this was the Judgment of *Gog* and *Ma-*

gog, God revenging his Peoples Quarrel: We have alſo an Inſtance of God's Juſtice upon the *Ethiopians* in the like Terms, by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. xviii. 6. *They ſhall be left together unto the Fowls of the Mountains, and to the Beaſts of the Earth: And the Fowls ſhall ſummer upon them, and all the Beaſts of the Earth ſhall winter upon them.* The plain Senſe of this is, there ſhould be a great Slaughter of them, and they ſhould ly and rot above Ground, and become a Prey to all ravenous Creatures: We meet with a Threatning to the ſame Purpoſe againſt the *Iſraelites* by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Chap. vii. 33. *The Carcaſes of this People ſhall be Meat for the Fowls of Heaven, and for the Beaſts of the Earth, and none ſhall fray them away.* The plain Senſe of this we have in the next Verſe, *v.* 34. *Then will I cauſe to ceaſe from the Cities of* Judah, *and from the Streets of* Jeruſalem, *the Voice of Mirth, and the Voice of Gladneſs*, &c. All which will be verified in *Babylon* before this Vial be poured out; for we find this the Effect of the fifth Vial, *Chap.* xviii. 22, 23. ſo that here we muſt mean, ſomething further than that againſt *Jeruſalem* and *Judah* will be inflicted upon *Babylon*. In this we have to conſider, 1. The Herauld. 2. To whom the Proclamation is publiſhed. 3. The Contents of this Edict.

1. We are to view this Herauld, 1. In his Deſignation. 2. His Situation.

(1.) I ſaw an *Angel*, or more cloſly, one *Angel*; by whom ſome mean *our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*: But under another Type we have him repreſented in this Viſion, *viz.* of *him that ſate on a white Horſe*. Some make him an *Archangel*, which is the ſame with the former; for we ſhewed, we read of no *Archangel* but the *Redeemer*: As for thoſe idle Stories about the *Hierarchy* of Angels, there is no Footing in Scripture for them; we muſt then allow this to be an ordinary created Angel in the Viſion. If it be enquired, Why is he called *One*? I anſwer, This may be in Oppoſition to the *three unclean Spirits* that came out of the Mouths of the *Dragon*, *Beaſt*, and *falſe Prophet*, Chap. xvi. 13. Whereas here Chriſt makes one *clean Spirit* perform all his Will. But then the Queſtion is harder, *Whom ſhould this Angel repreſent*? Some tell us, We ſhould not ſeek Myſteries in all the Parts of this Prophecy; which certainly is a Truth: Yet it requires Diſcretion to diſtinguiſh betwixt theſe Parts of the naked Viſion that require no Interpretation, and thoſe that do. I preſume, when the Angel only ſpeaks to *John*, there is no need of Fiſhing for a *Myſtery*; but when an Angel is brought in with ſuch a publick Piece of Imployment in his Hand, we may not think nothing is ſignified by him, which is the Caſe here. Such as are of this Mind however are not at one, ſome meaning one Thing, ſome another. I have made it evident, this whole Paſſage does not concern the Day of Judgment in any of its Branches; and therefore I wave the Conceits of theſe upon this Particular. They bid faireſt for the moſt probable Opinion, who by this Angel underſtand the *Goſpel-Miniſtry*; and the rather that the Command is given to the Prophet, *Ezek.* xxxix. 17. *Son of Man, ſpeak unto every feathered Fowl.* And even ſo, at that Time, the faithful Miniſters may be moved to make ſuch a loud Call as correſpond to this: And that here the Angel is called *One*, is to ſhew the Unanimity and Harmony God will then eſtabliſh among them, they will not give different and therefore uncertain Sounds.

(2.) The Situation of this Angel, *Standing in the Sun*. This wants not Difficulty either. Some tell us, No more is to be underſtood here, *by ſtanding in the Sun*, but to be *in aprico*, i. e. They are to do their Work openly and avowedly: No doubt this will conſtitute a Part of it. Others underſtand thereby the Goſpel, becauſe their great Work is to be imployed therein: If by this Angel we are to underſtand *Miniſters*, this cannot be excluded. Others by the Sun mean Chriſt, called the Sun of Righteouſneſs; and ſo they are ſuch as adhere to him, and ſtand by his Cauſe: We may allow all of them to conſpire to make up one full Senſe.

2. To whom this Proclamation is made, *Saying to all the Fowls that fly in the Midſt of Heaven*. It it premiſed to that, *He cried with a loud Voice*; the Senſe of which we have often heard before, and that it ſhews both the Authority of the Speaker, and the Notoriety of the Publication. There is no ſmall Debate about theſe to whom he calls: Theſe who apprehend the whole of this Viſion to concern the Day of Judgment, are much ſtraitned what to make of this, till one of late has found out a Knack to extricate them, by telling us, We are to underſtand *Devils* thereby; and that here this *Angel* calls them, and lets them looſe upon the Wicked: They adduce, for Proof of this, a Paſſage from the Parable of the Sower, *Mat.* xiii. 4, 19. where *Devils* are underſtood by *the Fowls of the Air*; as theſe two Verſes compared together clear. But they ſhould have conſidered, that at the *general Judment*, the Devils themſelves will be judged, yea, and in the Order of Time before the Wicked, and be ſhut up in their everlaſting *Caverns*; and ſo it is not poſſible to imagine how they can be let looſe upon the Wicked. This will appear from *Chap.* xx. So that, whatever Satisfaction the *Fiends* have now,

firſt

firſt to tempt, and afterwards torment the Children of Men, in order to obſtruct the Progreſs of Chriſt's Kingdom, there will be none to them then, when the Doom of Chriſt's Enemies will be of a Piece with their own: This I think deſtroys that curious Piece of Thought.

Others again incline to underſtand this literally, and then the Senſe of it is, When *Babylon* will be deſtroyed, the Carcaſes of all Sorts of Perſons will be expoſed to the wild Fowls of the Air, and Beaſts of the Field. This indeed I take to be a more tolerable Senſe than the former; Only they proceed on the old Scheme, that all is to be literally underſtood, which, if granted, would mar the Senſe of the Prophecy; yet here it is plain that it ſeems to be more allowable than in moſt other Parts, and will bear the greateſt Congruity with the above adduced Texts from other Prophets: Yet ſtill ſomething ſtands in the Way, that we cannot go in therewith; I ſee not how the Word here can agree to expreſs only *carnivorous Fowls*, nor have we any Account of rapacious Beaſts. The Notion of the Word ὄρνις will not ſupport this, which they make properly to ſignify a *Vulture*, and ſo one of theſe Kinds to be put for the whole; For we are ſure it is a general Deſignation, and imports no more than a *winged Fowl*, whether wild or tame: So ſometimes it is to be underſtood of a *Hen*, Mat. xxiii. 37. *How often would I have gathered thy Children together, even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens?* And ſometimes it ſignifies other Fowls, whether clean or unclean; but in the *Prophets*, (whence I think we ſhould fetch the Senſe of it) it is uſed to expreſs a moſt formidable and prevailing Enemy, *Jer.* xii. 9. *Mine Heritage is to me as a ſpeckled Bird; the Birds round about her are againſt her*: Whence it is plain we are to take Birds for People. But then the Difficulty remains, and is this, How can theſe be ſaid to be fed with the Fleſh of *Babylon*, and theſe that adhere to her, as they are mentioned in the Text, unleſs we allow theſe who will be imployed to be *Cannibals*, ſuch wild and rude Men as feed really upon the Fleſh of their Enemies? If we ſhould allow *Eating* to be taken figuratively alſo, it will ſalve this; but we are got too far forward: This here is manifeſtly a proverbial Speech, as will appear from Scripture, 1 *Sam.* xvii. 44. *Goliath* ſaid to *David*, *Come, I will give thy Fleſh unto the Fowls of the Air, and to the Beaſts of the Field.* To which *David* makes Anſwer, *v.* 46. in the very ſame Terms, *I will ſmite thee, and take thy Head from thee; And I will give the Carcaſes of the Hoſt of the* Philiſtines *this Day unto the Fowls of the Air, and the wild Beaſts of the Earth*: Which are plainly the bold Words of daring Warriours; and ſignify neither more nor leſs, than that they ſhould be utterly deſtroyed, without Regard or Compaſſion to their Quality. If we indiſcreetly puſh the *Phraſe* further, there will be no want of Raſhneſs, becauſe the Force of the Words will not ſupport it; and beſides, we are in imminent Hazard to miſtake. And, that mention is made of *all the Fowls of Heaven*, aſſures us, this will be the laſt Engagement the Church will have with her Enemies; and at that Time God will congregate all that are Enemies to *Babylon*, who will cut her off Root and Branch, and ſhe ſhall never be able to make Head againſt the *Lamb* and his Worſhippers afterwards. Their Flying ſignifies their Expedition, and ſhews they would not linger after the Call is given. And that they are deſigned from the Place of their Abode, *the Midſt of Heaven*, declares they will be called from all Corners; or, if by Heaven we are to underſtand the *Church*, it ſhews that all of them will heartily and ſtrenuouſly concur in this Work.

3. The Proclamation; 1. In general, And, 2. Amplified, *v.* 18.

(1.) There is the Proclamation in general, *Come and gather yourſelves together unto the Supper of the great God.* This is no doubt with Alluſion to *Sacrifices*, eſpecially of *Peace-offerings*, at which there were Feaſts; as we find in the Days of *Samuel*, 1 Sam. ix. 19, *&c.* when the Prophet entertained a great many at that ſolemn Feaſt, and among the reſt *Saul*, who, becauſe he was to be King of *Iſrael*, was to have a particular Portion by himſelf; and therefore we have *Samuel*'s Speech to the Cook, *v.* 23. *Bring the Portion which I gave thee, of which I ſaid unto thee, Set it by thee.* The like we find done by *David*, when he brought the *Ark* of God from *Kirjath-jearim*, 2 Sam. vi. there was made a goodly Entertainment for all the People according to their Quality: For tho' we read not of any diſtinguiſhing *Viands* prepared for the *Princes*, yet we may not think they were neglected, eſpecially that we find the Proviſion made for the Populacy; For it is ſaid, *v.* 19. *He dealt among all the People, even amongſt the whole Multitude of* Iſrael, *as well to the Women as to the Men, to every one a Cake of Bread, a good Piece of Fleſh, and a Flagon of Wine.* Juſt ſo, when *Solomon* dedicate the Temple, he made a Feaſt to all *Iſrael* for *ſeven Days and ſeven Days*, 1 Kings viii. This is reckoned the greateſt Feaſt read of in Scripture. From this it may be concluded, that God's diſcharging his Juſtice againſt *Babylon*, and the Execution thereof by the Inſtruments of his Appointment, will be as acceptable to him, as Peace-offerings, which carried along with them a ſpecial Solemnity.

If it be objected, This Word of *Supper* or Feaſts agrees well enough to Sacrifices, eſpecially of Peace-offerings, where all was merry; we ſtill are at a Loſs to adapt this to the Caſe in Hand, where the *Supper* is plainly in *Juſtice* and *Vengeance*; ſo that, unleſs we are able to juſtify this Phraſe to expreſs the *Judgments of God*, we do nothing. I anſwer, We will be at no Strait to get ſuch Expreſſions as this, to denote the righteous Judgments of God, from the *Prophets*, particularly the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. xxxiv. 6, 7, 8. *The Sword of the Lord is filled with Blood, it is made Fat with Fatneſs, and with the Blood of Lambs and Goats, and with the Fat of the Kidneys of Rams: For the Lord has a Sacrifice in* Bozrah, *and a great Slaughter in the Land of* Idumea. *Behold, the Unicorns ſhall come down with them, and the Bullocks with the Bulls, and their Land ſhall be ſoked with Blood, and their Land ſhall be made fat with Fatneſs. For it is the Day of the Lord's Vengeance, and the Year of Recompence*, &c. We have it to the ſame Purpoſe, but cloſſer, by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Chap. xlvi. 10. *This is the Day of the Lord God of Hoſts, a Day of Vengeance, that he may revenge him of his Adverſaries: And the Sword ſhall devour, and it ſhall be ſatiate, and made drunk with their Blood: For the Lord God of Hoſts hath a Sacrifice in the North-Country by the River* Euphrates. This I take to be the ſureſt Key of the Prophecy, and ſhews there will be a very great Slaughter, and that the Words of this Text are perfectly juſtified from other Prophets, whoſe Words, generally ſpeaking, muſt ſignify the ſame Thing. After all this, I ſee no Neceſſity to examine other Opinions, which are very various, and, when put off the common Lay of driving at the Day of Judgment, have nothing of either *Scripture* or *ſound Reaſon* to ſupport them. At this Time *Babylon* will pay dear for all the Miſchief ſhe had brought upon the *Church*: She was drunk long ſince with their Blood, and now, in Requital, her Corps will be a Feaſt to all others; Nor will it be in her Power to prevent or retrieve her Miſery.

(2.) The Amplification of this, *v.* 18. *That ye may eat the Fleſh of Kings, and the Fleſh of Captains*, &c. Which is plainly an Enlargement upon the Text of *Ezekiel*, Chap. xxxix. 18. *Ye ſhall eat the Fleſh of the Mighty, and drink the Blood of Princes.* Here indeed the Enumeration is more full, becauſe the Aſſembly will be greater, and the Slaughter proportionable: And indeed this Account is ſo full, that it comprehends all that belongs to *Antichriſt*. Nor ſhall I be at further Pains to go through Particulars, which ſeem plainly to be couched up in the Generals; and ſo we may look upon this Angel as ſinging the *Triumph* before the *Victory*: The Reaſon is, becauſe they were ſure to vanquiſh, before they engaged.

19 And I ſaw the Beaſt, and the Kings of the Earth, and their Armies gathered together, to make War againſt him that ſat on the Horſe, and againſt his Army.

This is the laſt Branch of the third Part of the Amplification of the *ſixth Vial*, containing a ſhort, but comprehenſive, Account of the Armies of *Babylon*, which were at Length inſiſted on in the Hiſtory of the *ſixth Vial*, and here, as we ſee, but paſſingly touched. Before we heard of the Diligence of the three *Unclean Spirits*, here we have an Account of their Succeſs. This then is a ſhort Muſter-roll of *Babylon*'s Forces againſt him that ſat on the white Horſe: Where we are to notice very ſhortly theſe two; 1. The Conſtituent Parts of this Army. 2. Their Deſign.

1. The Parts of *Babylon*'s *Army*, which are nothing but what we have met with before, and explained at Length, as ſhall be pointed at when we go through them: Only here it would be remarked of the three componing Parts, The firſt is greater than the ſecond, and commands both that and the third; and the ſecond is greater than the third, but influenced by the firſt; and ſo of Courſe the firſt muſt be feweſt, the ſecond more numerous, and the third moſt of all.

(1.) The *Beaſt*. Of this we had a full Account, *Chap.* 17. but there is ſome Difficulty to reconcile this with *v.* 20. of this Chapter, where we read of the *Beaſt* and *falſe Prophet*, and here only of the *Beaſt*; whence ſome conclude learnedly, The *Beaſt* and *falſe Prophet* are *one*. 'Tis true, this is of a Piece with their Reaſoning on *Chap.* xiii. where we read of *two* Beaſts, which theſe Expoſitors alſo make to be *one*. The Falſhood of this we viewed upon the Place. There is indeed another Inference more natural, That the *Beaſt* and *falſe Prophet* join together againſt the *Lamb*; and ſo, tho' they are not *one*, yet they have *one* common *Deſign*: And therefore I am of the Mind, this Beaſt comprehends both theſe Beaſts mentioned *Chap.* xiii. and otherwiſe diſtinguiſhed by the Names of the *Beaſt* and the *Falſe Prophet*: And the rather (as we

we have ſeen) that the whole Territories of the Dragon were parted betwixt the *firſt Beaſt*, i. e. the *Papal* Power, and *ſecond Beaſt*, i. e. the *Mahometaniſm* Intereſt: And conſequently the Word *Beaſt* muſt comprehend all the three. Theſe conſtitute the firſt Rank, becauſe all the reſt depend upon them; for all the Commotions ever were made in the World ſince the Commencement of *Chriſtianity*, may be eaſily reduced to one of theſe three Adverſaries.

(2.) *The Kings of the Earth.* To be ſure we are not here to mean all the Kings of the Earth; for *the Kings of the Eaſt* did cleave unto the Intereſt of Chriſt. Whether theſe be the whole *ten Kings* we find mentioned, *Chap.* xvii. who firſt concurr'd to exalt the Beaſt, *v.* 12. and afterwards united their Forces to deſtroy him, *v.* 16. is not hard to determine; And I am confident they will be none of theſe Kings here mentioned: But I take them to be the ſame with theſe aſſembled at the Battle of *Armageddon*, *Chap.* xvi. *v.* 14, and 16. and whom we have again otherwiſe imployed, *Chap.* xviii. 9. in lamenting the Caſe of *Babylon*: So that they are theſe who will adhere to the *Intereſt* of *Babylon*, after the reſt have deſerted her. Theſe *Kings* are influenced by the *Beaſt*, and will therefore join Iſſue for his Reſcue, and will make a notable Appearance that Way.

(3.) *Their Armies.* It needs be little Debate, whether here we are only to mean the Armies of the *Kings*, or the Armies of the *Beaſt* in Conjunction with them; For indeed, if we ſhould ſtrip the Beaſt of his adhering Kings, the Army would be very ſmall: But, in regard both the Beaſt and theſe Kings are imbarqued in the ſame Bottom, the Armies of the one may be juſtly deſign'd the Armies of the other. I confeſs it is not an ill or idle Thought of ſome learned Men, who incline to diſtinguiſh betwixt the Armies of the Beaſt, and the Armies of the Kings attached to his Intereſt: By the *Armies* of the Beaſt, they mean their religious Societies, which ſpring from *Monaſtries*, *Abbacies*, *Colleges*, *Schools*, *Seraglios*, the ſeveral Orders of *Jeſuites*, *Monks*, *Friars*, &c. among the *Papiſts*, and *Derviſhes* among the *Mahometans*; who, when Matters come to this laſt Pinch, will liſt themſelves and fight, endeavouring to retrieve the Condition of their grand *Maſters*: But we are ſure all this will be in vain. And by the *Armies* of the *Kings* they underſtand the *regular Forces* and Levies made by the ſeveral Kings that join the Beaſt. This indeed makes the Rendezvouze exactly correſpond with the Narrative of the *Vial*, Chap. xvi. 13, 14.

2. The Deſign of this Gathering, *To make War againſt him that ſat on the Horſe, and againſt his Army.* This Clauſe I am ſure defeats the Opinion of theſe who would underſtand this whole Paſſage of the Day of *Judgment*; for there can be no fighting then, all Chriſt's Enemies will flee before him, to eſcape his equally heavy and juſt Hand, if they knew where. The Shift is poor theſe learned Men are driven to: For, ſay they, the *Beaſt* does not get the *Kings* of the Earth and their Armies to fight againſt him that ſat on the Horſe and his Armies at the Day of Judgment, which would be a Madneſs to ſuppoſe; But the Meaning is, when Chriſt comes to Judgment, he will find the Beaſt, theſe Kings and their Armies, making War againſt his *Church*. I can appeal to any conſidering Perſon, whether they can bring this out of the Text; and if it be not there, it is plainly a Comment of their own, without any Ground in the Words, where it is expreſly ſaid, the Apoſtle *ſaw the Beaſt and the Kings of the Earth gathered together to make War againſt the Lamb and his Armies.* So that here is no *Tribunal*, but a formal warlike Expedition, where two Parties Antagoniſts appear upon the Field, both hoping to be victorious. Had this Fancy come, *Chap.* xx. 8, 9. there would be ſome Shew of Probability to ſupport it, becauſe there we find the *Camp* of the Saints beſieged; but here there is no ſuch Account. Beſides, the two Paſſages will be found to differ from other in ſome very conſiderable Points; as, 1. That War, *Chap.* xx. is more than a Thouſand Years after this, and therefore they cannot be *ad idem*, as ſome contend. 2. They are not the ſame Enemies here as there; for the Beaſt and the falſe Prophet are the Promoters of this War, whom we find taken and ſent to Hell in the next Verſe; whereas the Enemies, *Chap.* xx. are *Gog* and *Magog*, whom we will find to be different from theſe in all Things, except their implacable *Enmity* againſt Chriſt and his Church. 3. It is ſaid, that the *Devil* is ſent to Hell, where the *Beaſt* and *falſe Prophet* were before; ſo that they cannot be the ſame. 4. But neither of theſe Paſſages are to be meant of the Day of general Judgment, which will follow them both: For at this Time will they have met with Six remarkable Strokes of the *Vials*; after the Alarms of the *Trumpets*, the *ſeventh Vial* is to give the finiſhing Stroke to the Miſery thereof upon Earth; upon the Back of which will come to paſs that bleſſed Period of the Church, that will laſt a full Thouſand Years, during the Time of Satan's being bound. No ſooner will he be let looſe, but he will hound out *Gog* and *Magog* againſt the Saints for ſome Space, till God take Compaſſion on the afflicted State of his Church, and avenge their Quarrel after a

very extraordinary Manner: Yet all this While the Day of the laſt Judgment is to come. There is a notable Increaſe of the Expreſſion here, from what we had *Chap.* xiii. 7. *It was given to him to make War with the Saints*; But in this Text, the *Beaſt*, &c. are to make War with Chriſt and his Saints, even while they are in a warlike Diſpoſition: So that *Antichriſt* and his Followers will be ſo far from being any Thing ſoftned by all they had met with before, they will be the more inraged. There is yet another notable Difference betwixt theſe two Paſſages, *viz.* Chap. xiii. the *Beaſt* was to *overcome* the *Saints*; but here he will be *overcome* and vanquiſhed by the *Saints*. That Action will be deciſive, and therefore theſe Enemies of *Chriſt's Kingdom* will ſummon up all their Force to give the laſt Stroke with Violence and great Rage. Yea, if we conſider the Diſadvantage they will be at by the drying up of the Waters of *Euphrates* in the Beginning of this *Vial*, it will be a moſt deſperate Engagement on their Part.

How much this firſt Part of the Chapter diſcovers itſelf to be the *Amplification* of the *ſixth Vial*, is very plain, yea, and is confeſſed by theſe who refuſe the former Chapter to have any Concern with the preceeding *Vials*. In the Emblem of the *Vial* we had the *Levies* of *Babylon*, and the Methods uſed to gather them together; the Field of Battle condeſcended on, and the Iſſue of the Action not obſcurely hinted at: We had there but a ſhort Account of *Chriſt's Army*, under the Figure of the *Kings of the Eaſt*; In this we have a full Account of Chriſt the Captain and Leader of the *Lord's Hoſt*, as alſo of his *Forces*, and how accutred, as alſo the Iſſue plainly touched at in the Atchievements: So that when both are laid together, as there is a notable Harmony betwixt them, ſo a full Account of *both Armies*; and, in all, a clear Diſcovery of the juſt Grounds of this War on the *Church's* Part, and the moſt deſperate and unjuſtifiable Deſigns and Methods of *myſtical Babylon*.

Amplification of VIAL VII.

20 And the Beaſt was taken, and with him the falſe Prophet that wrought Miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the Mark of the Beaſt, and them that worſhipped his Image. Theſe both were caſt alive into a Lake of Fire burning with Brimſtone.

21 And the Remnant were ſlain with the Sword of him that ſat upon the Horſe, which Sword proceeded out of his Mouth: And all the Fowls were filled with their Fleſh.

WE had the Hiſtory of this Vial, *Chap.* xvi. from *v.* 17. to the Cloſe, at great Length: Here we have the Illuſtration thereof, in two Verſes; tho' in fewer Words, yet very ſignificant, and in my Opinion more plain. This ſhews the Iſſue of the former Engagement, as it reſpects the Leaders of *Babylon's* Army, *v.* 20. and as it reſpects the Army it ſelf, *v.* 21.

I. The Iſſue of this terrible War with reſpect to the firſt Movers of this great Antichriſtian Army; where we have, 1. Their Names. 2. Some diſtinguiſhing Characters of the ſecond. 3. The Fate of both.

1. Their Names, *the Beaſt*, and *the falſe Prophet*. All own, by the firſt we are to underſtand that Beaſt *that roſe out of the Sea*, Chap. xiii. 1. I am as confident we are to underſtand by the ſecond, *that Beaſt that roſe out of the Earth*, Chap. xiii. 11. becauſe it is ſaid, *v.* 14. of that Chapter, *He deceiveth them that dwell on the Earth, by the Means of thoſe Miracles which he had Power to do in the Sight of the Beaſt.* This is alſo aſſented to by the greateſt Part, and therein they are right; but then, when they come to the Application, they fall into Pieces; for they make theſe two Beaſts to be one and the ſame, and conſequently this *Beaſt* and the *falſe Prophet* to be alſo the ſame. I examined the Grounds of this Opinion, and diſproved them, on *Chap.* xiii. and only repeat in a Word what I there eſtabliſhed at Length, *viz.* By the *Beaſt*, we are to underſtand *Popery*; and by the *falſe Prophet*, *Mahometaniſm*.

2. The Characters of the ſecond, *viz.* the *falſe Prophet*; which are, 1. *That he wrought Miracles before him, i. e.* the Beaſt, as it was, *Chap.* xiii. 14. 2. By theſe Miracles he is ſaid *to deceive them that had received the Mark of the* Beaſt, *and worſhipped his Image.* In the preceding Paſſage he is ſaid *to deceive them that dwell on the Earth*: But no Word there of *receiving the Mark of the* Beaſt; which to me proves, that *they who dwell on the Earth*, and *they who have the Mark of the* Beaſt, are equi-

polent

polent Expreſſions, and ſignify the ſame Thing. All this is explain'd above. From all I conclude, this *Beaſt* and *falſe Prophet* are not to be taken for Perſons, but for Societies, which tho' they may differ from one another, yet both of them agree in their Oppoſition to the Truth, from which they are equally diſtant; or, to ſpeak yet more properly, we are by them to mean theſe Setts of falſe and idolatrous Religions which abound in the World, and have bewitched the moſt Part of the Children of Men, to the great Obſtruction of the *glorious Goſpel* of *our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. If we keep this in our Eye, it will help us much when we proceed to the

3*d* Thing; The Fate of theſe Two, in theſe two Expreſſions.

(1.) *They were taken*, ἐπιάσθη. It is obſerved, this Word is twelve Times read in the New Teſtament, and always in the *Paſſive*, whereof they find eight Times in the Writings of this *Apoſtle*; and ſo Expoſitors think the ſureſt Way is to bring the Senſe of it here from his other Writings, as, *John* vii. 30, 32. *They ſought to take him*; and, *The Phariſees and chief Prieſts ſent Officers to take him.* From theſe and other Places, it ſeems to ſignify to make one a *Priſoner*; here it ſeems to ſignify a *Priſoner of War*. There is no Difficulty to reconcile theſe two; for this War is an *Act of Judgment*, as we ſaw above, *v.* 11. and it is plain here, they are to be ſecured in order to *Judgment*, which by the Rules of *War* cannot fall to the Share of any taken in fair Battle, unleſs the Party defeat be guilty of Felony and Treaſon (as indeed the Caſe is here) which cannot obtain, while both the Combatants are independent of one another. This runs ſmoothly, if the two were *Perſons*; but being neceſſarily to be underſtood of *Conſtitutions* (as the Throng of Interpreters own) it will not hold. Nor will the Matter be mended, by ſaying, We are to underſtand theſe Perſons that at that Time will be Repreſentatives of what is meant by the *Beaſt* and *falſe Prophet*, and this they will have to be the *Pope* for the Time; but, where will they find one to repreſent *Mahomet*? Beſides, we proved, that not one particular *Pope* can be called the *Beaſt*, but the Whole of Popery; and, if it be underſtood of all the Fry of both theſe Parties, this will make the *twenty Verſe*, and *twentieth and firſt* ſignify the ſame Thing. I am of the Mind then, we are by theſe two, to underſtand theſe two Conſtitutions; and ſo to *be taken*, will ſignify, 1. That Chriſt's Power is ſuperior to theirs: Here the ſtrong Man's Houſe is taken, and his Weapons wreſted from him, and himſelf bound. 2. The reducing of this Beaſt and the falſe Prophet to an utter Incapableneſs of acting, either *offenſively*, or *defenſively*; and ſo the *Church* will be at perfect Eaſe for them. 3. That now they are in the Conqueror's Power; for the Captive is not to diſpoſe of himſelf, but all his Motions are at the Diſcretion of the Victor. 4. It imports a very ſhameful Defeat: It is reckoned more glorious in ſome Caſes, to be ſlain in the Field of Battle, than be a *Captive*; for theſe are reſerved as *Trophies* of their *Conqueror's Glory*, to be made Monuments of their own and their Adherents Shame.

(2.) The next Step of their Fate, is, *Theſe both were caſt into a Lake of Fire*, &c. From this I think it very plain, the Beaſt and the falſe Prophet are not *one* and the *ſame*, (as a great many think) elſe, why ſhould ſuch diſtinguiſhing Expreſſions all along be uſed that make them different? Nor will the Diſtinction of the Pope's *Civil* and *Eccleſiaſtick* Power ſolve the Matter; for they have conſolidate them into one, and are one at leaſt as to the Subject, yea, are never ſeparate, where the municipal Law of particular Nations does not neceſſarily oblige. Hence there is Reaſon to eſtabliſh the former Senſe of the *Beaſt* and *falſe Prophet*. In this laſt and moſt fatal Part of their *Cataſtrophe*, we are to conſider a few Things;

Firſt, Where they were put, *They were caſt into a Lake.* As for the Act *Caſting*, we had it before, *Chap.* xviii. 21. It ſhews the Strength of the Agent, and Violence of the Action. The Place in general is called a *Lake*, λίμνη. We have not met with this Word before, and indeed there is too much Striſe about it. It is oftentimes uſed in the New Teſtament, where ſometimes it ſignifies a Lake of the Sea, or a Branching thereof within Land, where there is not any Communication of ſome notable River thorow it; ſo we read of *the Lake of* Genneſareth, *Luke* v. 1. But whether this be the proper Senſe of it, I leave in Debate; only I know it is not always taken ſo: Beſides, when we are upon the Inveſtigation of a Prophecy, it were hard to be tied up to the literal Meaning of a Word. Some render it a *Pit*, for which I ſee no Authority; but I know it is uſed to ground an Alluſion to the Deſtruction of *Korah* and his Company, who were ſwallowed up quick: A great many own this is a plain Fetch; for the Word is nowhere ſo rendred in any Author, whether ſacred or prophane, but it is uſed to expreſs a *very capacious and deep Thing filled with ſomewhat.* Others again contend, This is with Alluſion to the Deſtruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, which were ſwallowed up in Fire and Brimſtone, and their Place converted into a Lake, to this Day known by the Name of *Aſphalites*, or a *Lake of Brimſtone.* It cannot be refuſed but this is curious; but then, it ſuppoſes the *Beaſt* and the *falſe Prophet* to be *Perſons*: And, if that fails, it mars the whole,

fine ſpun Web; and, if they put in the whole Adherents to the Cauſe of *Antichriſt*, they leave no Senſe to *v.* 21.

Secondly, This Lake is ſaid to be of *Fire, burning with Brimſtone.* Here, again, they ſtrike in for a literal Senſe, and drive hard againſt the given Senſe of the *Beaſt*, becauſe *Fire* is a moſt ſenſible Thing; and to affirm a *Conſtitution* and *Principles* will be burnt, they receive with Laughter. But, in my humble Opinion, we ſhould take the whole Words of the Text along with us; for it would appear that *Fire* and *Burning* are more uſed for the Sake of *Brimſtone*, than for their own Sakes; becauſe, beſide the inflamable Nature, and violent Heat of *Brimſtone*, it has a moſt nauſeous and lothſom Scent, to aſſure us the Ruin of theſe two will be moſt *terrible* and *aſtoniſhing*, and that the Ruin will be *irreparable*. 'Tis queſtioned, Whether this is to be underſtood of proper Hell? I ſhall not conſider all the Conceits this Way; but offer my Thoughts in theſe few Things, 1. It is beyond all Contradiction, theſe are Expreſſions uſed in many other Places of Scripture, to denote the *Place* of the *Damned*; of which we will hear more in the next Chapter. 2. God will put it in the Heart of the Church, to *damn* all theſe Pieces of Idolatry in a very ſolemn Manner, after their Danger and Falſhood is diſcovered convincingly to the Conſciences of all the World. 3. Theſe Conſtitutions will be finally *diſſolved* and *reprobate*, never again to revive. 4. There will remain no more but an hateful and unſavoury *Remembrance* thereof in the Minds of all.

Thirdly, The Caſe they will be in, *Alive*. Some who would underſtand them two of Perſons, tell us, They will be ſent to Hell in the ſame Condition *Enoch* and *Elijah* were taken to Heaven. But this will not do, nor indeed jump with the literal Senſe of the reſt of the Text. That which I take to be the Meaning of this Cauſe, is ſhortly this, Theſe *Antichriſtian* Conſtitutions will be judged and condemned, while they in *Part* obtain, and are ſubſiſting. Many Hereſies do of themſelves decay, and die in one Age, and are revived in another; as we ſee has been the Caſe of the *Arian* and *Pelagian* Errors; and juſt ſo with the *Antinomians*. But, as for *Mahometaniſm* and *Popery*, they will be expelled and demoliſhed, ſo as never again recruit either Life or Strength.

II. The Iſſue of this War, as it reſpects the Armies of *Babylon*, *v.* 21. Where we have ſhortly to view, 1. The Character given them. 2. Their Fate. 3. The Conſequent thereof.

1. The Character of the *Followers* or Worſhippers of the *Beaſt* and the *falſe Prophet*, they are deſigned *the Remnant*. To underſtand this, we muſt return to the Muſter-roll of *Babylon*, *v.* 19. and then it will be found this Word, λοιποὶ, comprehends the *Kings of the Earth and their Armies*. Then it is evident, this will be the moſt abſolute Victory ever was obtained in the World before, and will not have a Parallel till the Deſtruction of *Gog* and *Magog*. There is no Account here of any that eſcaped; but all are either taken or ſlain. The *Beaſt* and *falſe Prophet* make up the Roll of the firſt: Theſe are the moſt conſiderable, and for the Sake of which all this Struggle is made; and then their *Armies* and *Allies* are all ſlain; and ſo theſe are called the *Remnant*, or, more agreeable to the Original, *the reſt*.

2. Their Fate, *Were ſlain with the Sword of him that ſat upon the Horſe, which Sword proceedeth out of his Mouth*. We cannot doubt but the Senſe of this is to be repeated from *v.* 15. It ſeems plain their Judgment is not the ſame with the Judgment of the Beaſt and falſe Prophet, tho', 'tis plain, it will not be leſs exterminating. To underſtand this of Converſion to the *true Faith* of Chriſt, as ſome incline, I ſee not how in any Senſe they can find a Meaning for the laſt Clauſe of the Text, *The Fowls of Heaven were fled*; and therefore, I am read to think, there is a great Slaughter pointed at here: Yet I ſhall not refuſe but, from the Senſe of the Word, *Sword of his Mouth*, oftner than once mentioned, there may be the Reduction of ſome in a Way of Mercy; but, from what we heard before, they cannot be expected to be a great Number: And ſtill, from the Text, it is apparent, the far greater Part will be really killed. This gives Ground to a moſt ſtunning Obſervation, That theſe who aſſociate with the Enemies of Chriſt, tho' themſelves may have leſs Malice, will buy their Compliance dear at the Length; Conformity to ſinful Courſes, is a moſt dangerous Thing. Theſe Expoſitors, who underſtand the Whole of this Paſſage relative to the *Day of Judgment*, in a Manner quite neglect this Verſe; nor indeed is it poſſible for them to make Senſe of it, ſeeing, after the Beaſt and the falſe Prophet are (in their Opinion) caſt into Hell, what can they ſay about the Remnant? for, to be ſure, they are to be diſpoſed of after another Manner. Now, what can that be at the Day of Judgment? But, according to the Senſe I have given, the total Abolition of Popery, *&c.* is *the caſting into the Lake of Fire burning with Brimſtone*; and the Slaughter of all their Adherents, is plainly pointed at in this Verſe.

3. The Conſequent of this, *And all the Fowls were filled with their Fleſh*. Here we have Obedience given to that Call of the *Angel*, *v.* 17. and the Accompliſhment of

of the Promiſe made by him, *v.* 18. of this Chapter. There is a Paſſage of Scripture, whoſe Context will afterwards be made uſe of, may help to clear this *prophetick* Expreſſion; *Iſa.* lxvi. 16. *For by Fire and by his Sword will the Lord plead with all Fleſh, and the Slain of the Lord ſhall be many.* v. 24. *They ſhall go forth, and look upon the Carcaſes of the Men that have tranſgreſſed againſt me: For their Worm ſhall not die, neither ſhall their Fire be quenched, and they ſhall be an Abhorrence unto all Fleſh.* All own this Paſſage to contain a Victory in Time, and to point at the final Judgments of God upon his Enemies before the End of the World, and is a notable Commentary upon the Contents of this Portion of *holy Writ*, and diſcovers to us what an abſolute *Victory* Chriſt will obtain over all his Enemies, at this grand Period of the World.

A very overly Conſideration of what is ſaid, and comparing it with the given Senſe of the *ſeventh Vial*, will make it abundantly appear that this is the plain Illuſtration of that; for in both there is to be no more Word of *Babylon*, for ſhe will be utterly deſtroyed, and that without Remedy, or Hopes of Recovery.

CHAP. XX.

THERE is an hideous Out-cry among *Expoſitors* about the Difficulty and Obſcurity of *this* and the *two following Chapters*, eſpecially of this. That the Whole of this Prophecy is obſcure, needs no other Proof, but the many jarring Opinions of the Learned in all Ages; But that this ſhould be more dark than the reſt, I ſee no Reaſon: Nay, I am ready to think, if they have found more Straitnings in the reſolving thereof, they have plainly occaſioned them, by firſt laying down Schemes at the Beginning, which cannot be reconciled with this laſt Part of the *Prophecy*. As we have all along made it our Work to humour the Threed of this *Revelation*, ſo now we will find the Advantage of it; for, without thwarting the Text, it will ſpeak for itſelf, and ſhew how harmoniouſly all its Parts hang together.

I take this Chapter to contain a Viſion of what is to fall out after the ſeven Vials, to the End of the World; and that, as the Narrative of theſe great Events follow the Vials and their Amplification, ſo will the Truth or Accompliſhment. This is both plain and natural, and puts us out of the Neceſſity of ſtraining any Part thereof, either to one Purpoſe or another, further than the natural Order of the Prophecy directs.

Yet, before we enter on it, we ſhall ſhortly examine ſome of the Thoughts of the Learned about the general Scope of this Chapter.

Some would have all this to be underſtood *literally*, as they incline to uſe the reſt of the *Book*: But here themſelves murder their own Opinion, while they take the Chain literally; for, how can a material Chain bind a *Spirit*? when we find it could not bind theſe poſſeſſed with Devils, *Mark.* v. 3, 4. *No Man could bind him, no not with Chains; becauſe he had been often bound with Fetters and Chains, and the Chains had been pluckt aſunder by him.* And how ſhall we believe that the *Devil* can be bound by a material Chain, being a pure, tho' unholy Spirit himſelf?

Others tell us, All this ſhould have happened in the Time of *Conſtantine*, when he expelled *Heatheniſm* the *Empire*: But then we cannot find a Period of Time, wherein the Church enjoyed ſo much Peace and Quiet as is foretold in this Chapter. Beſides, the End of the *thouſand Years* would fall in with the Beginning of the *Reformation*, at which Time he was to be looſed, and then was to be a Time of flaming Perſecution, and to uſher in the Conſummation of all Things; ſo that ſurely theſe are miſtaken.

Some take this to be the ſame with the *firſt Seal*, and that it ſhews the Space of Time in which the Goſpel was to flouriſh from the Beginning: But, becauſe they muſt count now 1729, and no doubt afterwards more, inſtead of 1000, they tell us, The Time is to be *indefinitely* taken. The Injuſtice of this Opinion I expoſed, *Chap.* xi. 2. Nor is it ſaid here, *The* Gentiles *ſhould tread under Foot the Outer-court, and the Holy City*; or, that *the Witneſſes were to propheſy in Sackcloth*. The Continuation of that Period is different from this, let us take the Number how we will; the firſt being 1260, and this but 1000, which we may not ſay are all one in the Signification, without great Injury to the *Scripture*.

The laſt Opinion I notice, is of them who make this 1000 Years to be upon the Expiration of the 1260; for, ſay they, The *Dragon* was to have Liberty to fight the *Prophets* all that Time, and then was to be defeat, and upon the Back of that *bound*,

after he was caſt out into the Earth, as, *Chap.* xii. 13. and then this Binding of *Satan* did fall in with the Reformation; ſo that at leaſt 300 of the 1000 are elapſed. I own this has the Advantage of any of the former, and yet I cannot reconcile it with the ſeveral Clauſes of this Chapter, nor yet with the Threed of the Prophecy. In this Chapter it is ſaid, the *Devil was not to deceive the Nations all that Time*, v. 3. I am confident this is not yet verified; and I have ſo intire Credit to the *Word of God*, that I believe not one *Jot* of it can fall to the Ground unfulfilled. Nor is there any Thing more plain, than that even ſince the Time of the Reformation, Satan, by *Mahometaniſm* and *Popery*, has deceived many Nations, and continues ſtill ſo to do. Again, this Period, by the Courſe of the Prophecy, is after the Fall of *Babylon*, and conſequently it is not yet come: Nor do I ſee how we can reconcile this preſent Condition of the Church, with that glorious State thereof while *Satan* is bound, as we have it propheſied in this Chapter, and enlarged on in the two following.

I hope all theſe Things will be plainer as we go through the ſeveral Parts of this Chapter, which I think naturally opens itſelf to us in theſe notable Purpoſes: 1. The Binding of Satan, to *v.* 4. 2. The bleſſed State of the Church, to *v.* 7. Theſe two ſeem to be contemporary, and to run parallel to other, beginning and ending at once, or near to other. 3. The Looſing again of Satan, and the Effects thereof, to *v.* 9. This is to ſucceed the former, and to take Place immediately after it. 4. God's Vengeance and Juſtice upon the Devil and his Inſtruments, to *v.* 11. And laſtly, A ſhort and comprehenſive View of the laſt and general Judgment, to the Cloſe of the Chapter.

1 AND I ſaw an Angel come down from Heaven, having the Key of the bottomleſs Pit, and a great Chain in his Hand.

2 And he laid hold on the Dragon, that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thouſand Years,

3 And caſt him into the bottomleſs Pit, and ſhut him up, and ſet a Seal upon him, that he ſhould deceive the Nations no more, till the thouſand Years ſhould be fulfilled: And after that he muſt be looſed a little Seaſon.

This is the Hiſtory of the Binding of Satan: Where we have, 1. The Perſon that bound. 2. The Character of Satan. 3. The ſeveral Steps the Binder took with him. 4. The Time and Deſign of his Binding. 5. A ſhort Preoccupation of the third Part of the Chapter.

I. The Binder, *v.* 1. Where, 1. His general Character. 2. Whence he came. 3. With what he was provided.

1. The general Character of this Binder, *And I ſaw an Angel.* The *Conjunction* denotes the Connexion betwixt this and the former Chapter, but will not prove thoſe Emblems to have the ſame Signification with other Types before, unleſs it could be otherwiſe proven the Paſſages point at the ſame Things. Many Times we find καὶ uſed when a new Subject is brought upon the Field, as *Chap.* xv. 1. As for the Introduction, *I ſaw*, it is explained above. The firſt Thing he diſcovers is *an Angel*, about whom there is a Throng of Opinions. Some would have it meant of the *Emperor Conſtantine* the Great: This is ſufficiently refuted above. Theſe who take it *literally*, run to one of the moſt fabulous Places in the *Apocrypha*, Tob. viii. 1. and would have this Angel to be *Raphael*: This deſerves not Conſideration. Some ſay, It was *Gabriel*, but they think it not worth their while to offer a Reaſon, and ſo we may as eaſily reject it. Others would have *Luther*, at leaſt that Miniſtry cotemporary with him, to be this Angel; but how he or they came by the Key of the bottomleſs Pit, they are not at Pains to account for. The only Difficulty that remains is, Whether this be a created or an uncreated Angel? A great many ſtand up for the *firſt*, and ſay, He is *Michael*, of whom we read *Chap.* xii. But if this *Michael* ſhould be the Angel of the Covenant, as I think was proven upon the Place, the Debate falls. There are other Opinions about *Archangels*, as precarious as any Thing we have heard: Nor are they able to document any *Archangel*, but Jeſus Chriſt the Prince of Angels; and ſo we are agreed again. The only Objection is, He is ſimply called *an Angel*. This is manifeſtly falſe, for he has two notable and diſtinguiſhing *Characters*, which cannot agree to any created Angel: As for the want of an Adjective, *great* or *ſtrong*, &c. as in ſome other Places, there

there is no need of any of them, becauſe we find ſometimes theſe Adjuncts added, when we are not to have any Thought of an uncreated Angel, as above, *Chap.* v. 2. Again we have more here, for this Angel is ſtronger than Satan; he has the Key of the bottomleſs Pit, and a great Chain: So that I ſee not how we can underſtand by him a created Angel; and therefore the ſole Meaning of this muſt reſpect *our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. Yet I am ready to think this is meant of the *Power* and *Influence* of Chriſt, rather than his *perſonal Preſence*, as in ſeveral Paſſages above: What follows clear this.

2. Whence he came, *Down from Heaven*. It is well obſerved, this Motion notes a continued Action, and therefore cannot be applied to the Incarnation of Chriſt, which was not viſible: And if it was to be more ſenſible in the *Effects* than in the *Operation*, we can be under no Neceſſity to mean a perſonal Appearance, with the groſſer Sort of the *Chyhaſts*: It is ſufficient there be Power enough from Chriſt for the Production of this great Effect, and ſo it will comprehend the Inſtruments he will honour. Only we muſt allow the great *Efficacy* to be from the great *Agent*; And ſo, while it is ſaid, *He comes down from Heaven*, nothing more is to be underſtood, than that *he takes to him his great Power, and reigns*, Chap. xi. 15. For he comes from the Throne where the Father ſits, and manifeſts himſelf in a moſt unwonted Manner, but ſtill more in *Degree* than *Kind*; for we are not to think Chriſt will come otherwiſe than by the Fulneſs of the Bleſſing of the Goſpel, till he come in the Clouds to *judge* both the *Quick* and the *Dead*.

3. How he is provided: Here we find his *Tools* exactly fitted to his Work. He had this grand Enemy to ſecure, which every Thing would not do, therefore he has *a Key* and *a Chain*. I ſee no Hardſhip to allow both theſe to be in his Hand, yea, in one Hand. It is but an hungry Criticiſm, that the Chain was *upon* his Hand, or *above* his Hand, and the Key *in* his Hand; to be ſure both were ſo diſpoſed, that he could conveniently uſe any, or both of them; and ſo we make no Work about ἐπὶ, eſpecially that the whole is a *prophetick Phraſe*. We are particularly to notice theſe two Parts of the Angel's Furniture;

(1.) *The Key of the bottomleſs Pit*. This proves the *Angel* to be our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who has this as a Part of his *great Character*, Chap. i. 18. As for the Senſe of *Key*, we had it there; the Difference betwixt *Hell* there, and the *bottomleſs Pit* here, is removed, *Chap.* ix. 1. where we have the Word. And here it ſeems the rather to point at Chriſt, that it is not ſaid this Key was given him, as is aſſerted of the former Angel: But 'tis ſaid here, *he had it*; it was then his *Right*, and all Power any can pretend to, is derived from him, *who has all Power in Heaven and Earth*.

(2.) *A great Chain*, where, 1. The Thing. 2. Its Property.

Firſt, The Thing, *Chain*, ἅλυσις, which properly ſignifies what is indiſſoluble; it is often uſed in Scripture, and always rendered, as here, a *Chain*. Few think this to be underſtood *literally*, for a Piece of linked Metal-work, which is both ſtrong and pliable; but then it is hard to find the Prophet's true Meaning. Some think it ſignifies good and wholeſom Laws duly execute, which reſtrains the Wicked: If this be meant of *Humane* Laws, they will be puzzled to prove that Satan has Regard to them, yea, or to Divine Laws, when an omnipotent Power is not exerted to reſtrain him. And even as to Satan's Inſtruments on Earth, good Laws, tho' never ſo well applied, do little more than reſtrain the open Commiſſion: But here it ſignifies what forcibly contains the *Perſon*, that he can neither ſecretly nor openly imploy his Strength, as is neceſſarily implied in the very Force of the Expreſſion. I own, the Word *Chain* is ſometimes taken for an Ornament; ſo, *Daniel* had a *Gold Chain about his Neck*, Dan. v. 29. after he gained the King's Favour: But we never find it in a good Senſe, when any is ſaid to be *bound* with a *Chain*, as here; But it ſignifies *Captivity*, and that in the moſt vile, and abject Manner, as we read, *Ezek.* xix. 4. *They brought him* [Iſrael] *with Chains unto the Land of* Egypt. It is ſaid, *Manaſſeh was bound with Fetters*, Orig. *Chains, and carried to* Babylon. But ſtill the Queſtion is behind, What are we to underſtand by this Chain? No doubt the Power and Strength of Chriſt is to be thereby meant; and it is a prevalent Strength, as we have it plainly, *Luke* xi. 21, 22. *When a ſtrong Man armed, keepeth his Palace, his Goods are in Peace; but when a ſtronger than he ſhall come upon him, and overcome him, he ſhall take from him all his Armour, wherein he truſted.* So that it is in his Power to bind him.

Secondly, The Quality of this *Chain*, it is *Great*. So that this is the ſame Thing, in other Words, with what we have above, *Thou haſt taken to thee thy great Power, and reigned*. Here we have the Exerciſe of this Power, firſt directed againſt the grand Enemy of the Church. And further, that this Power is called *great*, is to ſhew us, it will be *comparatively* ſo, to all the Power he formerly exerted againſt *Satan* and his *Tools*: Chriſt always kept him under Reſtraint, but not with a Power ſo cloſly and

ſtrictly applied. Hence I conclude, when this Time comes, the *Devil* and all his *Agents* will be pent up *ſtricter* than ever they were before; They were but as it were in open Priſon, but then they will be in cloſs Cuſtody. Further, this *Chain* is ſaid to be *great*, for the Comfort of the Church, that ſhe may be ſure *Satan* ſhall never be able to break it; and ſo we find it holds him till he be looſed.

II. The Character of the Perſon bound, *v.* 2. *The Dragon, that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan.* Where it is plain the two firſt *Names* are *figurative*, and the two next *proper*; all which we explained, *Chap.* xii. 9. Nor can we underſtand them otherwiſe here, ſave in that Place it was the *Devil* in Heatheniſm who was *caſt out*, but not confin'd to *Hell* as here; for after that he wrought by *Popery* and *Mahometaniſm*, and now that both of theſe will be deſtroyed under the *ſeven Vials*, the *Devil* that acted them will be apprehended. He is called the *Dragon* here, as there, becauſe much of *Paganiſm* is to be found in the *Beaſt* and *falſe Prophet*. It is not (after what was premiſed to this Chapter) poſſible to underſtand by this *Dragon*, &c. any one Man or Power on Earth: And therefore I ſhall ſuperſede the Examination of a great many different Opinions about this, and allow the former Senſe to take Place here.

III. The ſeveral Steps this Binder took, which are five.

1. *He laid Hold on him.* This Word is uſually intended to expreſs the Taking of a Priſoner, *Mat.* xxi. 46. *They ſought to lay Hands on him*, i. e. to make him a *Priſoner*. It ſignifies naturally, *to grip forcibly*, or with an overpowering Strength; which declares the Power of Chriſt to be above that of *Satan*, and therefore he is able to keep him in Spite of all Endeavours.

2. *He bound him.* This has Reſpect to the Chain, for with it he is ſettered; which ſays, after this it ſhall not be in his Power to eſcape: So that it is not only in Chriſt's Power to *apprehend*, but to *tye* him Neck and Heel.

3. *He caſt him into the bottomleſs Pit*, i. e. with Force and Violence he threw him into his proper Priſon, Hell; as I proved, *Chap.* ix. 1. It is a very empty Thought ſome have, that all the Senſe is, he was put out of Authority; for certainly there is more here: He was not only chained, but incarcerate, and ſo can uſe no Means for his own Enlargement.

4. *He ſhut him up*, i. e. ſhut the Mouth of the Pit upon him, ſo that, tho' his Fetters ſhould break, yet would he not be able to get out.

5. *He ſet a Seal upon him.* Here our Lord ſerves Satan with the ſame Sauce his *Inſtruments* the perfidious *Jews* treated him, *Matth.* xxvii. 66. *They made the Sepulchre ſure, rolling a Stone, and ſealing it.* We have the ſame Expreſſion, when *Daniel* was ſhut up in the Lions Den, *Daniel* vi. 17. *A Stone was brought and laid upon the Mouth of the Den, and the King ſealed it with his own Signet, and with the Signets of his Lords, that the Purpoſe might not be changed concerning* Daniel. This ſeems to be the Senſe of it here; but ſtill we muſt allow as great Difference to be betwixt the Seals, as betwixt the Perſons ſealing.

From all theſe laid together, we may conclude that Satan will be ſhut up in his Cell, and ſo have no Power to diſturb the Church as he has done from the Beginning, and will continue to do until that Time: Yet it would appear, all this will not be done in an Inſtant, but be carried on by Degrees, as here mentioned; But how much Time will be ſpent we may not determine, ſeeing the Text is ſilent.

IV. The *Time* and *Deſign* of his *Binding*; of both which particularly.

1. The *Time*, he will be bound *a thouſand Years.* It is much debated what the Senſe of this is. Some contend it is an *indefinite* Number, as a Thouſand is often taken in Scripture, *Job* ix. 3. *He cannot anſwer him one of a Thouſand.* Job xxxiii. 23. *An Interpreter one of a Thouſand.* Pſal. l. 10. *The Cattle upon a thouſand Hills.* In all which, and many other Places, a Thouſand ſignifies no more than very many: There is no Doubt but it is ſometimes taken *indefinitely*; but, will any contend it is not to be underſtood otherwiſe? elſe in my Opinion it will not prove here. Theſe indeed who make all Scripture-numbers *indefinite*, are more conſiſtent with themſelves; but how far they are from the Truth, was ſhown, *Chap.* xi. 2. Now, that *Thouſand* is taken a great many Times, yea, oftner for a *definite*, than an *indefinite* Number, is plain: Nor ſhall I be at Pains to prove a great Truth, owned by the moſt Part. It may be ſaid indeed, What is in this Text to make this Number *definite*, more than in ſeveral other Texts? I anſwer, 1. Commonly where a Thouſand is taken indefinitely, the very Circumſtances of the Text diſcover it; and ordinarily it is not in Point of *Suppuation*. Beſides, I remember of no Place in Scripture where a *thouſand Years* is taken *indefinitely*. 2. We have a Thouſand Years ſix Times mentioned here in the Space of ſix Verſes; which moves a great many to think it is to be underſtood *definitely*, whatever Way it be taken in ſome other Places, elſe they think this preciſe Number would not be ſo often reiterated.

3. If

3. If all the other Numbers in this Prophecy be *definite*, to be ſure ſo is this; the Truth of this Propoſition may be ſeen in the ſeveral Parts.

But then the Difficulty is not over; for we are not yet ſure whether it is to be taken *properly* or *prophetically*: We read before of *Months* and *Days*, and here of *Years*. Now, if we ſhould take the *Years* as we did the *Days* and *Months*, it would ſwell the Number prodigiouſly, and be no leſs than 360000 Years, which I think enough to baffle that; and therefore we are not to take it *prophetically*. If it be enquired, Why other Numbers are to be taken *prophetically*, and this *literally*? I anſwer, Becauſe all the other *Numbers* concern either the *low* State of the Church, or the *Fate* of her Enemies; but this concerns the *triumphant* State of the Church upon Earth: And further, the Twelve hundred and ſixty Days were begun, if not before the Writing of this Prophecy, yet ſhortly after; and ſo it was convenient the Prophet ſhould not be ſo plain in his Expreſſions: Whereas this Thouſand Years are not to begin till Satan be bound, *i. e.* after the ſeven Vials are poured out. This Number alſo may be ſo plain, for the Church's Comfort, to aſſure her the Days of her Glory even *upon Earth*, ſhould not be much inferior in Continuance, to the Days of her Adverſity when ſhe *propheſied in Sackcloth*; And the Time of Satan's and his Partiſans Confuſion ſhould near anſwer to the Time wherein they waged War with the Church.

2. The Deſign of Chriſt in binding Satan, *That he ſhould deceive the Nations no more, till the Thouſand Years be fulfilled*; So that the Earth will be free of Satan's Cozening all that Time. This is another Argument for the ſtrict Meaning of this Number; for the World ſhall be free of both his *Craft* and *Cruelty*, till that Time come to an End, or, in the Words of the Text, be *fulfilled*.

Some incline here to take the *Nations* in Oppoſition to the *Jews*: But, long before this, the *Jews* are mixed with the Nations, nor can they be diſtinguiſhed from them any where; beſides, it would appear we ſhould take this in the ſame Senſe here, as we did before, *Chap.* xii. 9. where *Satan is ſaid to deceive the whole World*, which will take in the *Jews*, as well as the *Gentiles*; and, *v.* 8. of this Chapter, they are deſigned *the Nations which are in the four Quarters of the Earth*. I think then, if we oppoſe *Nations* either to the *Jews* or to the *Chriſtians*, we will miſs the Scope; For, when that Time comes, in which Satan will be bound, all the Kingdoms or Nations of the Earth will become the *Kingdoms of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. We had the ſame Word *deceive* above, *Chap.* xii. 9. and explained it. Some think all the Meaning of this Clauſe is, That Satan ſhould not prevail with the Nations to *perſecute* the Church, as he had done before, for the Space of One thouſand two hundred and ſixty Years. So that this promiſes a long Tract of *Peace* to the Church: I own there is ſome Ground for this Senſe, *v.* 8. and it muſt be included here; but I think it too narrow, nor ſhould we reſtrict the Force of a Word, where the Text does not require. The Word ſignifies properly to cauſe to wander, or go out of the Way. It is true, Perſecution is not the right Way; yet there are more wrong Ways than it, as we find the Apoſtle ſpeaking, 2 *Cor.* xi. 3. *I fear leſt by any Means, as the Serpent beguiled* Eve *through his Subtilty, ſo your Minds ſhould be corrupted from the Simplicity that is in Chriſt*. And ſo they may be deceived, who take up with falſe Principles; and conſequenly this is a Promiſe the the World ſhall be free of *Error* and *Seduction*, by this Binding of Satan. They are all deceived alſo, who are corrupted in their *Morals*: This then is a moſt comprehenſive Promiſe of theſe three notable Privileges, *Peace*, *Truth*, and *Holineſs*, which will follow upon the *Binding of Satan*. We would ſee what Concurrence and Countenance to this, we can have from the *old Prophets*.

(1.) Of *Peace*. That will no doubt be the *golden Age* of the Church; the odious Names of *Diſtinction*, which are the Bane of the Church's Peace now, will then be removed; all her Enemies will diſappear: This will be the Effect of that great blooming Knowledge the Church will be bleſſed with, *Iſa.* xi. 6. ---- 10. *The Wolf ſhall dwell with the Lamb*, &c. *And they ſhall not hurt nor deſtroy in all my holy Mountain; for the Earth ſhall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea*. It is not poſſible to fix a Period of the Church when this was fulfilled: And no doubt, our Want of Peace, and continual Bickerings, are owing to Satan's Subtilties, ſowing the Seeds of Diſcord, and blowing the Bellows of Diſſention, betwixt Nations, Families and Perſons; but when he is bound, theſe will ceaſe of Courſe; and then will that *Prophecy* be fulfilled in its utmoſt Comprehenſion, which we have all the Reaſon in the World to expect, *Iſa.* ii. 4. *They ſhall beat their Swords into Plow-ſhares, and their Spears into pruning Hooks: Nation ſhall not lift up Sword againſt Nation, neither ſhall they learn War any more*. What leſs can be hop'd for, when the *Prince of Peace* ſhall be *King of Nations*? Pſal. lxxii. 7. *In his Days ſhall the Righteous flouriſh, and Abundance of Peace ſo long as the Moon endureth*. To this may be ad-

added, *Jer.* xxxii. 59. *I will give them one Heart, and one Way, that they may fear me for ever.* There are a great many other Texts to this Purpoſe, that have never yet been fully accompliſhed.

(2.) Of *Truth.* Satan is the Father of Lies, but God is the *God of Truth*: Now, when Satan is bound, the Knowledge of the Truth will abound; as in that of *Iſaiah*, *The Earth ſhall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord*, &c. And, *They ſhall all know me from the leaſt unto the greateſt.* Dan. xii. 4. *When the Time of the End is come, many ſhall run to and fro, and Knowledge ſhall be increaſed.* The great Cauſe of this will be *the Outpouring of the Spirit of God upon all Fleſh, and your Sons and your Daughters ſhall propheſy*, Joel ii. 23. I know this is applied by the Apoſtle to the *extraordinary Gifts* of the *Holy Ghoſt*, Acts ii. 17. but we may allow that to be a partial Accompliſhment of it, and not ſtand in the Way of a further Fulfilling thereof, eſpecially that ſo many other Texts plead for it.

(3.) Of *Holineſs* or *Righteouſneſs*, which will alſo abound at that Day, according to that notable Prophecy, *Iſa.* xlv. 8. *Drop down, ye Heavens from above, and let the Skies pour down Righteouſneſs: Let the Earth open, and let them bring forth Salvation, and let Righteouſneſs ſpring up together: I the Lord have created it.* To the ſame Purpoſe is that, *Obad.* 17. *Upon Mount* Zion *ſhall be Deliverance, and there ſhall be Holineſs.* We have a large Prophecy of this glorious State of the Church by *Iſaiah*, where, after many Excellencies, he adds, *Iſa.* xxxv. 8. *An Highway ſhall there be, and it ſhall be called, The Way of Holineſs*, &c.

V. There is a ſhort Preoccupation of what we have, *v.* 7. *After that* [thouſand Years] *he* [Satan] *muſt be looſed a little Seaſon*; i. e. all theſe Reſtraints laid upon him for the foreſaid Space, will be taken off, and he let looſe in the Earth, to follow his old and wonted Trade. It is ſaid, *He muſt be looſed*; which Neceſſity flows from the Decree of of God. *Paul* ſpeaks in the ſame Stile, 1 *Cor.* xi. 19. *There muſt be alſo Hereſies among you, that they who are approven may be made manifeſt.* The Space of Time is not condeſcended on, but ſimply called a *little Seaſon*; this may not be ſo in itſelf, but comparatively to the Time in which he had created much Trouble to the Church before he was bound, and alſo a little Time in Compariſon of the One thouſand Years wherein he was bound, and the Church flouriſhed; yet it is not poſſible to condeſcend upon the Limits of this Time from both theſe.

We are next to view that bleſſed State of the Church during that Thouſand Years of Satan's Impriſonment in the next three Verſes; which we ſhall conſider in theſe Parts, 1. Two Viſions, *v.* 4. repreſenting the Condition of the Church in all her Members. 2. The Condition of her Enemies at the ſame Time, which contributeth much to her true Happineſs, *v.* 5. 3. A Declaration of the Nature of that State, in the Cloſe of *v.* 5. and the Church's Happineſs reſulting from that State.

4 And I ſaw Thrones, and they ſate upon them, and Judgment was given unto them: And I ſaw the Souls of them that were beheaded for the Witneſs of Jeſus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worſhipped the Beaſt, neither his Image, neither had received his Mark upon their Foreheads, or in their Hands: And they lived and reigned with Chriſt a Thouſand Years.

Here we have the Viſions, containing Repreſentations of this happy State of the Church; where, for Order's Sake, I ſhall conſider, 1. The Emblem of the Rulers, or Judges, or Princes God will raiſe up at that Time. 2. The Emblem of the Subjects, which will be found of a Piece with their Rulers. 3. What is aſſerted of both the State and Perſons, which conſummates the Happineſs of the Church.

I. The Emblem of theſe *Rulers* God will raiſe up in his Church, when ſhe arrives at her Meridian Splendor and Glory upon Earth; where I ſhall notice, 1. The Chairs of State, or Thrones, which will be very great and auguſt. 2. How theſe will be filled; for many a Time Iniquity fills the Throne, but it will not be ſo then. 3. The diſtinguiſhing Privilege of theſe Rulers.

1. The *Rulers* in the Church, which I take for the Civil Magiſtrates, deſigned from their *Chairs of State, I ſaw Thrones.* This we had Occaſion to enquire into before, they are Badges of Sovereignty: It is not ſaid, there was but one Throne, but in the Plural, *Thrones, indefinitely*; and therefore the Expreſſion may be equal to an *Univerſal*; and the rather, that we heard before, *Satan* was not to deceive the Earth: And ſo here,

here, all the Thrones of the Earth are to be underſtood. From this, I think, we may ſafely infer, there will be no perſonal Reign of Chriſt upon Earth, otherwiſe there would be but one Throne, as we find, *v.* 11. when he comes to Judgment there is but one Throne, and thereon Chriſt was placed. I think, *David* had a View of this State of the Church, in his Pſalm of Exultation, *Pſal.* cxxii. 5. *For there are ſet Thrones of Judgment, the Thrones of the Houſe of* David. Now, we are ſure, in all the Line of *David* over the *Iſraelites*, they had but one Throne, and ſometimes that in a very tottering Condition; but here there is a *Plurality*, yea, an *Univerſality* of Thrones. There ſeems further to be wrapt up here, the Harmony of theſe Thrones; they do not rival one another, but are all of one Mind. It ſeems to be a very groundleſs Notion, to underſtand by theſe Thrones the Teachers *Seats*, the ſame with us called *Pulpits*; for I never meet with this Deſignation given theſe. They are indeed called *Chairs* or *Seats*, but never θρόνοι; and therefore theſe *Thrones* are to be underſtood of *Royal Seats*, and muſt ſignify Power and Royal Sovereignty.

2. How theſe Thrones were filled, *they ſat on them*; they were not empty, for God that raiſed the *Thrones*, took Care to plant them. Some take in the next Clauſe here, and turn the Whole thus, *I ſaw Thrones, and they ſat on them, to whom Judgment was given.* No doubt this is true; but I incline to keep cloſs by the Words, for our Tranſlation is pretty juſt; beſides, there is no Need of this Fetch. But then, the Queſtion is, *Who ſits on theſe Thrones?* A great many think, they were the Thrones of the Church's Enemies: How they get to this Thought, I ſee not. I am ſure the Contrary appears from the Text: For, 1. All the Enemies of the Church were either *taken* or *ſlain*, Chap. xix. 20. and theſe who were Captives were caſt into Hell: And, how they could ſit on *Thrones*, I ſee not. 2. *Satan* was bound in the preceeding Verſes, and therefore could not ſet up others in their Place. 3. *Antichriſtian* Thrones are inconſiſtent with the *Reign* of the Saints in the Cloſe of this Verſe. But then, ſome enquire, What ſhall we do with the *Relative They*? for there is no *Antecedent* to which it refers. I anſwer, There is no *Relative* here; no, nor ſo much as a Particle, till we come to the next Clauſe, where we meet with *them*, which may as well agree to the *Thrones* as to the *Perſons* that filled them; and ſo this may be rendred impersonally, *there ſat on them*, i. e. God had provided theſe Thrones with Men according to his own Heart; and therefore, we may well reckon theſe *Thrones* will be filled with the *Saints* we afterwards read of: Not that this will ſupport the Opinion of the *Fifth Monarchy Men*, That, in no Part of the World, any have Right to govern, who are not Saints; for they ſay, *Dominion is founded on Grace.* But the Senſe here is, God will make his *Peoples Rulers to be Peace*, and *their Exactors Righteouſneſs.* The formal Reaſon of their Dominion is not their *Sanctity*, elſe the moſt Part of the World would be Kings at that Time; but their Title is owing to the Providence of God, who raiſeth them up to *judge* his *People*; and their *Holineſs* is owing to his *Spirit.*

3. The diſtinguiſhing Privilege of theſe Rulers, *Judgment was given unto them.* Some take this paſſively, and ſo the Senſe is, Theſe that ſat on the Thrones were judged, *i. e.* condemned. This is the Reaſon that ſupports this Thought, That theſe Thrones will be filled with God's Enemies: But we are ſure that *Judgment* is often in Scripture taken *actively* to paſs a Sentence, *Pſal.* lxxii. 2. *He ſhall judge thy Saints with Righteouſneſs, and thy Poor with Judgment.* Yet hence ſome take Occaſion to tell us, It is a Sentence of *Abſolution* paſt in Favours of theſe Saints *Antichriſt* had condemned. To carry off this, I adduce a parallel Place, in which all agree, *Dan.* vii. 22. *Judgment was given unto the Saints of the moſt High, and the Time came that the Saints poſſeſſed the Kingdom.* Here, to be ſure, we muſt take it *actively*; ſo God was pleaſed to promiſe, when that Time comes, right Judgment will be tied to theſe Thrones, and they who ſit on them will judge righteouſly: Then will all Evil-doers be called to an Account, and puniſhed according to the Demerit of their Crimes. Hence, I may conclude, the Earth will be purged from all ſtubborn and obſtinate Offenders. Let none alledge, that this judicial Power committed to the Saints, is incompatible with that Reign of Chriſt on Earth; for we have them joined together in the ſame Promiſe, *Iſa.* xxxii. 1. *Behold, a King ſhall rule in Righteouſneſs.* All underſtand this of Chriſt; yet does not that exclude, but eſtabliſh, the other Parts of the Promiſe, *And Princes ſhall rule in Judgment.* Here then all *Partiality* will be baniſhed from Judges and Rulers, and all *Obſtinacy* and *Contumacy* from Subjects.

Object. It would appear the *Poſſeſſors* of theſe Thrones differ from the *Saints* aftermentioned. *Anſwer*, It is not ſaid they differ from them in their *Sanctity*; for in that there will be a perfect Harmony, all the Difference will be in their Order: For, as in the Reign of *Antichriſt*, Kings gave their Kingdoms to the *Beaſt*, ſo now they will give *them* to *Chriſt.* Then it may be expected, there will not be an Oppreſſor or Tyrant

of a King thorow the World; for God will give them Judgment, and they will rule in Righteousness.

II. The Emblem of the Subjects, or the Body of the Church, *I saw the Souls*, &c. It was wisely done in our Translators, to repeat the Verb, *I saw*, because they are Accusatives that follow; so that, having spoke of the Rulers, he comes here to the Ruled, whom we have described at great Length, and that both positively and negatively; from both which we may have a full Account of the Quality of the Members of that Church.

1. The *positive* Part of their Character is from the Exercise of their Patience, *They were beheaded for the Witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God.* The stated Grounds of their Sufferings are two, *the Witness* or the Testimony *of Jesus*; this we explained, *Chap.* xix. 10. Again, the Word of God, explained, *Chap.* vi. 9. and refer to these Places. Their Sufferings we have in one Word, *They were beheaded*; originally, *smitten with the Ax*, i. e. suffered Martyrdom. Here, one Sort of Sufferings is put for all the rest, and one of the deepest to comprehend what is less: Or this may be mentioned to carry back our Thoughts to the Times of the *Roman Persecution*, whose Judges marched with an Ax carried before them; so that God does not forget the Sufferings of his People, even when long over. Here they give Proof of their Sincerity.

That here it is said, *He saw the Souls of such*, has occasioned very different Speculations: As for the Signification of *Souls*, we had it on *Chap.* vi. 9. How far this may obtain here, will be Matter of Enquiry afterwards. This indeed is straitning to the *gross Millenaries*, because it is only said he saw Souls: For, according to them, he should have seen both Souls and Bodies; and therefore they take the Words *synecdochically*, a Part for the Whole. The Force of this shall in due Time be considered. Others take it for the rational Part of the Man, which we commonly mean by the *Soul*; but then they will be straitned about their *living again*, for it is universally believed that the *Soul* is immortal. I do think they bid fairest for it, who by *Soul* understand the *Spirit, Frame* or *Temper*, which in Scripture is called the Soul, *Acts* iv. 32. *The Multitude were of one Soul*, i. e. of Spirits tun'd to the same Harmony. The Difficulty will be less in this Sense; for it will signify neither more nor less, than that in this blessed Period of the Church, the ancient *Spirit* and *Life* of *Christianity* will be revived, and there will be *few* but would cheerfully become *Martyrs* for the Sake of Christ. This is a very beautiful Character of them.

2. They are described *negatively*, in several Branches: 1. *They had not worshipped the Beast.* Of this see on *Chap.* xiii. 8. 2. *Neither his Image.* Explained, *Chap.* xiii. 15. 3. *They had not received his Mark*, &c. See *Chap.* xiii. 16. The Sense is, They had not polluted themselves by sinful Compliance in any Degree.

III. What is asserted of both, *They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand Years.* Here we have two notable Privileges, and the Continuance of them. We shall consider the Privileges at Length, and therein, 1. View them separately. And, 2. In Conjunction with Christ; where we will have Occasion to hear a great Part of that Controversy about the Millenary Reign.

1. It is said, *They lived and reigned*: Whence some gather they also *rose again.* Tho' it be not in the Text, yet we read of a *first* and *second Resurrection*; but if these differ, as I hope to prove they do, and that the *first* is *improper*, this will fall to the Ground. I shall therefore view these two distinguishing Privileges apart;

(1.) *They lived.* It is not said, *they rose again*; or, tho' it had, it would not serve their Turn, because we know there are two Resurrections: The first is not of Individuals but of the same Spirit; as, *Luke* i. 17. *John Batpist* is said *to come in the Power and Spirit of* Elias. The other Resurrection will be of Individuals, *i. e.* these who are buried shall rise again. But then it may be asked, What are we to mean by this *Living*? I offer these few Things to Consideration; 1. It is to state an Opposition between *that* Condition of the Church, and all that went before it. The best Men had the hardest Lot, and many of them were cut off by violent Deaths, as we have heard: But then the *Worshippers* of God and the Lamb will bruik their Lives, and there will be none to make them afraid; their Persecuters are all taken out of the Way. It might have been the Complaint of the Church, in the Words of the Psalmist, *Psal.* xliv. 22. *For thy Sake we are killed all the Day long, and are counted as Sheep for the Slaughter.* But then these Butchers will be slain, and the Saints will *live*, and be free of Persecution. We have the same Expression used to point out the prosperous State of the Church, *Ezek.* xxxvii. 12, 13. *Thus saith the Lord, Behold, O my People, I will open your Graves, and cause you to come up out of your Graves, and bring you into the Land of* Israel. *And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your Graves, O my People, and brought you up out of your Graves.* Yet none take this for a *pro-*

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per Reſurrection. Nor is it the only Place of Scripture to this Purpoſe; *Pſal.* lxxi. 20. *Thou which haſt ſhewed me great and ſore Troubles, ſhalt quicken me again, and ſhalt bring me up again from the Depths of the Earth.* Again we have the like Turn of Expreſſion, without any Eye to a proper Reſurrection, *Iſa.* xxvi. 19. *Thy dead Men ſhall live, together with my dead Body ſhall they ariſe. Awake and ſing, ye that dwell in the Duſt, for thy Dew is as the Dew of Herbs, and the Earth ſhall caſt out the Dead.* 2. They are to live comfortably, and have the Concurrence of all theſe Things that render Mens Lives truly pleaſant and deſirable. I do not ſay, with ſome, there will be the fabulous *Paradiſe* of *Mahomet*; yet I think there will be all *Neceſſaries* and *Conveniences* for the Life of Man, in greater Abundance, and obtained with more Eaſe, than has been ſince Sin corrupted the World. A notable Paſſage to this Purpoſe we have, *Iſa.* lxv. 17, &c. All that conſider this Paſſage of Scripture, own it ſpeaks of this happy State of the Church; and that, with all ſpiritual Bleſſings, there will alſo be a Train of temporal Mercies; for the Curſe of *Barrenneſs*, now upon the Earth, will in a great Meaſure be removed, as we may at Length ſee in the quoted Place.

(2.) *They reigned.* We had this before, and ſhall but touch at it here, and the rather it falls afterwards under our Conſideration. I take the Senſe to be this, that theſe who *lived* will alſo *reign*, that is, all the Church will reign without Oppoſition, for there will then be no Power in the Earth to top with her: This makes it plain it will be a common Privilege to all the Members of the Church.

Some take an eaſier Way, but I think not ſo ſafe, to diſtinguiſh betwixt the *poſitive* and *negative* Characters of theſe Saints, and apply them to different Perſons, thus, *I ſaw the Souls of them that were beheaded.* This they apply to the Souls of departed Saints, who were not to live till the ſecond Reſurrection, their Souls being already glorified in Heaven; and ſo the *reſt of the Dead, who did not live again*, is to be meant of them. The negative Character, *which had not worſhipped the Beaſt*, &c. this they apply to the ſtedfaſt *Chriſtians* under the Reign of *Antichriſt*, who had not complied with any of his ſinful *Courſes*: And then, that *Satan* will be bound, they will have a very ſweet and comfortable Time of it. This Change of their outward Condition they make the firſt Reſurrection. This is finely ſpun; but when we reflect upon the *Thrones* which muſt be on Earth, to what Purpoſe ſhould he ſee theſe Souls, if they were not to be amongſt the Number of them that live again? They can add nothing to the Senſe or Compleatneſs of the Prophecy. Beſides, we are ſure that both the *poſitive* and *negative* Parts of this Character are neceſſary to make a *Saint*: Not that *Martyrdom* is eſſential, yet ſomething equivalent is ſo, *i. e.* a fixed Reſolution to adhere to the *Teſtimony of Jeſus*, and the *Word of God*, tho' it ſhould coſt them their Lives: And ſo they are Martyrs, tho' not *actually*, yet in *Affection* and *Diſpoſition*.

2. They are ſaid *to live and reign with Chriſt.* This cuts off all our Thoughts of a libidinous Life; for they are to live in Fellowſhip with Chriſt, and after his Example. There is little Debate about the *Living with Chriſt*; for this, all own, may be without his perſonal Preſence. The Nature of it we explained alſo before, but the Difficulty is about the Saints reigning with Chriſt, which we ſhall a little explain from Scripture, and conſider what is objected as we go along.

They reigned with Chriſt. Some underſtand this of the *Triumphant Church in Heaven*, which I cannot join with, on theſe Conſiderations; 1. This Reign is for a limited Time, *a thouſand Years*, yet we know the Reign of the Saints in Heaven is for ever. 2. This Reign of the Saints is capable of *Interruption*, yea, will actually be interrupted at the End of the thouſand Years; which cannot be ſaid of the Glorified in Heaven. 3. This is ſuch a *Reign* as needs *Care* and *Watchfulneſs*; ſo we read of the Camp of the Saints, *v.* 9.

Others again would divide *Living* from *Reigning*, and find different Subjects for both; ſo they apply *Living* to the Saints laſt mentioned by the *poſitive* and *negative* Character, and *Reigning* they apply to thoſe that ſat on the Thrones. This I own to be ingenious; eſpecially that they prove from Scripture, that when the Spirit of God comes back upon Particulars before-mentioned, he is pleaſed to take a retrograde Motion, and begin with that Particular laſt mentioned. I can be very eaſy about this Senſe, provided, 1. We allow them that *reign* to be of the Number of them that *live*, i. e. are true and upright Chriſtians. 2. That thoſe who live, and are diſtinguiſhed from them that reign, do alſo in their own Way reign: For tho' I believe, when that happy State of the Church comes, there will be no Confuſion, yet I am perſwaded there will be as little *Tyrany* in the Governors, and therefore no *Slavery* in the Subjects. Beſides, I find *Reigning*, in this Prophecy, aſcribed to particular Believers in a private Capacity, and ſo they are deſigned *Kings* as well as *Prieſts*, Rev. i. 6. and ſaid actually *to*

reign, Rev. v. 10. *with Chriſt*. It is true, the Reigning of this bleſſed State of the Church will have the Advantage of that mentioned in the laſt-quoted Text, in this, that the whole Kingdom of Chriſt will have the Aſcendant over all other Kingdoms; yea, and that there will be no Power on Earth, either *ſeverally* or *conjunctly*, ſhall be able to diſturb the Peace of the Saints during that One thouſand Years.

From theſe two Words, *Living* and *Reigning* put together, I take the Senſe to be, That *there will be as great a Number of Saints, as if all the old Saints from the Beginning had riſen from the Dead*. Nor will it follow that theſe Saints ſhall not die for all that thouſand Years, as ſome dream; for it is enough there be a Succeſſion of Saints from one Age to another during that Period: Yet I am inclinable to believe, that Longevity will be one of the Bleſſings of that Day, *Iſa.* lxv. 20. *There ſhall be no more thence an Infant of Days, nor an old Man that hath not fulfilled his Days.* v. 22. *They ſhall not build, and another inhabit: They ſhall not plant, and another eat; For as the Days of a Tree, are the Days of my People, and mine Elect ſhall long enjoy the Work of their Hands.*

Object. From the Reading, *They reign with Chriſt*, then either they muſt be in Heaven with Chriſt, and then it is ſpoken of a *glorified State*; or elſe Chriſt muſt be on Earth with them, and this makes a true and literal Senſe of the Words, and eſtabliſheth the *Millenary Opinion* in its groſſeſt Senſe. I have proven before, this Viſion cannot be underſtood of Heaven, and ſo I paſs that Part of the Argument: As for the other, I intend afterwards to take it under Conſideration. At the Time, all I ſhall do, is to prove that this Conſtruction, *with Chriſt*, does not naturally or neceſſarily infer any Part of the Argument, becauſe for ordinary it ſignifies no more but *in Chriſt*, and ſo may agree to Saints in any Age of the Church: So God is ſaid, *Eph.* ii. 5. *To quicken us together with Chriſt.* Col. iii. 1, 3. *If you be riſen with Chriſt; Your Life is hid with Chriſt.* None of theſe Expreſſions ſuppoſeth Believers either to be in a glorified State, or that Chriſt is perſonally preſent with them upon Earth, for his gracious Preſence is all intended in theſe Texts. I own there will be more of Chriſt ſeen and felt then in his Church, than ever was before; tho' I cannot affirm there will be the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, as at the Beginning, which ſome contend for: 'Tis true, that may be for ought we know; but when, we have nothing in the Text to direct us, we had beſt let theſe Things paſs. Neither ſhall I urge againſt theſe uncommon Meaſures of the Spirit, or whether they will be *neceſſary* or not; for whoever is moſt *poſitive* in any of *theſe*, muſt be preſumed to be moſt *forewarn'd*.

The laſt Thing in the Text is the Continuance of theſe Privileges *a Thouſand Years*; or, as it ſhould be rendred, *that Thouſand Years*: For the Particle τὰ is expreſſed here, which was ſuppreſſed, *v.* 2. which to be ſure ſays it is the ſame Thouſand Years there mentioned. So that during Satan's Binding, the Church is to have Liberty; nor will her Peace laſt longer than *Satan* is *bound*: For it is ſaid, *v.* 3. *He was to deceive the Nations no more till* τὰ χίλια ἔτη, *that Thouſand Years ſhould be fulfilled.*

Having given the Senſe of the Text, and as I think agreeable to the Context, as well as to other prophetical Expreſſions; It remains we examine ſome other Opinions concerning this Period of the Church, moſt whereof we have anticipate in the Vindication of the given Senſe: Yet it is neceſſary we hint at a few more, and conſider their Grounds.

Some tell us, This Reign of Chriſt on Earth will be in *Paleſtine*, and that *Jeruſalem* will be rebuilt, and the *Levitical Service* reſtored. This ſeems not worthy of Confutation: For it is owned by all *Chriſtians*, that the whole Frame of the *Levitical Law* was *typical*, and could laſt no longer than the Truth appeared. Now, to imagine, in the *brighteſt State* of the *Goſpel Church* the *old Vail* and *Cloud* will appear, is not poſſible: For if the Uſe of ſingle *Circumciſion* did make the Death of Chriſt in vain, much more would the whole Law, ſeeing Circumciſion was but the initiatory Symbol. This alſo ſhews the Vanity of that Notion, that the *Jews* will be repoſſeſt of the *promiſed Land*; for the whole Earth will be *Canaan*, and the Church *Jeruſalem*: Nor could I ſee any Reaſon determining me to believe the *Jews* will ever be ſet up in the Form of a diſtinct Nation: Nor indeed is there any Need; for the Deſign is anſwered, when they embrace the Goſpel wherever they are found. Nay, I am ready to think, the *Jews*, after the long Confuſion of their Tribes, will never know how to order themſelves.

Others again from this Verſe flatter themſelves with a Kingdom of Chriſt upon Earth, much of the ſame Nature with what the *Jews* and even the *Apoſtles* dream'd of before the Aſcenſion of Chriſt, which would abound with all Manner of worldly Delights. We are told, That *Cerinthus* an Arch-heretick (of whom we ſpoke before) was the firſt that reduced this Notion to any Shape, and made this State of the Church rather agreeable to the Palate of an *Epicure* than a Chriſtian; for he made it to conſiſt in Riches,

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Voluptuouſneſs, &c. in ſhort, in every Thing agreeable to a carnal and unrenewed Palate. It is not our Buſineſs to enquire into the Truth of that *Author* or his *Works* (both being ſuſpected) it is ſufficient to remark, for the Confutation of the *Principle*, that it is quite contrary to the Nature of the *Goſpel*, as well as the *Promiſes*, which never encourag'd any to expect ſuch a State: Nor ſhall I contend with theſe who alledge the *Mahometans* borrowed their Thoughts of Paradiſe from theſe *Hereticks*; for there is a very great Harmony betwixt them, and eſpecially that both make this belong to a future State, which plainly cuts the Throat of the whole *Hypotheſis*: For how can we imagine Saints, who had been ſo many Thouſand Years in Heaven, and inured to theſe ſpiritual Joys there, could have any Pleaſure in a ſenſual Life on Earth, croſs the Rules of all Temperance and Holineſs, and much more the Life of Glory they were formerly bleſſed with?

Some again make all this *myſtical*, and only to point at a more clear Diſpenſation of the Goſpel than was before, and that the ſame began with the fourth Century, and the *Thouſand Years* to be purely *indefinite*. This is a very groundleſs Notion: For it is evident the State ſpoken of here is to fall in upon the Ruin of *ſpiritual Babylon*, i. e. the Fall of *Antichriſt*, which had not appeared in the World in *Conſtantine*'s Time under the Forms of *Popery* and *Mahometaniſm*. Beſides, this is to enervate the whole Force of the *Prophecy*, and to bring down the higheſt Expreſſions the moſt mean and pitiful Senſe, and reduceth its Friends to the moſt wretched Shifts to ſupport the ſame.

The laſt Opinion we examine is more agreeable and better fram'd, *viz.* When the World ſhall have laſted Six thouſand Years, in the Beginning of the Seven thouſandth Chriſt will come perſonally down from Heaven, and *raiſe* all the *Saints* have lived ſince *Adam*, out of their Graves, or wherever their Bodies are; and that their Souls ſhall come from Heaven, and be united to their Bodies, that they may *reign* with Chriſt for the Space of a Thouſand Years: This they call the *firſt Reſurrection*; upon the Back of which there will be a moſt holy and happy State of the Church: That then the *Curſe* of *Barrenneſs* will be removed from the Earth, and yet no Intemperance, or Vanity, or Uncleanneſs be found therein: This they call the *ſabbatical State* of the Church, and ſay it will laſt juſt a Thouſand Years before the End of the World, in which the Wicked ſhall have no Share.

If *Antiquity* and the *Authority* of the *Fathers* could legitimate a *falſe Gloſs*, this Opinion has both, for it was the common Principle of the Church in the Third Century: Nor did any call it in queſtion till *Jerome* and *Auguſtine* begun to examine the ſame, and diſprove it from the Scriptures, after which it loſt its Credit a long Time; and then it was adopted by ſome learned Men, and yet is ſtiffly maintain'd by not a few. I ſhall therefore be at the more Pains to enquire after the ſame, and convict it of ſeveral groſs Falſhoods: As,

1. We are ſure, Chriſt, as to his Humane Nature, is to continue in Heaven till the Day of Judgment; for, *the Heavens muſt receive him till the Times of the Reſtitution of all Things*, Acts iii. 21. which is commonly meant of the Day of Judgment. I own indeed, the Word is not always ſo to be taken; for we read it, *Mat.* xvii. 11. of *the reſtoring of all Things*: And apply'd to *John Baptiſt*, who came in the *Power and Spirit of* Elias, who is ſaid there *to have reſtored all Things*. I anſwer, This will not hold: For tho' the *Baptiſt* did reſtore or rectify the true Doctrine from the miſhapen Gloſſes of the *Jews*, which was his Work, yet he made no further Revolution in the *Jewiſh* Church. Beſides, the Word may be well rendred the *ratifying* and ordering of all Things. But further, we know that *Chriſt muſt reign till he hath put all his Enemies under his Feet, and the laſt Enemy is Death*, 1 Cor. xv. 25. which is not to be till the Day of Judgment; and conſequently the *perſonal Reign of Chriſt* will not be till that Time, when all his myſtical Members will go to theſe Manſions he has prepared in Heaven for both their Souls and Bodies.

2. They are under the hard Neceſſity of allowing two different and *proper Reſurrections*, croſs the Strain of the Scripture: For, while the Apoſtle is ſpeaking of the *proper Reſurrection*, he ſays, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 16. *That at the Sound of the Trump of God the Dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt*: Which to be ſure points not only at the Order of the Reſurrection, that the Godly ſhall be raiſed before the Wicked; But alſo ſays, this is to be the firſt proper Reſurrection, becauſe ſome of them *were then aſleep*, v. 15. and were not to be awaked by any till the laſt Trumpet: Nor were they to die again; for it is ſaid, *v.* 17. *So ſhall we be ever with the Lord.* Yea, it is expreſly ſaid, they were not to be with Chriſt on the Earth; but both theſe living at the Time, and theſe raiſed from the Dead, *will be caught up in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air.*

3. Chriſt is to come but once from Heaven after his Aſcenſion; but this Doctrine would have him to come twice. That he is to be expected but once, is evident, *Acts* i. 11. *This ſame Jeſus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, ſhall ſo come in like Manner as ye have ſeen him go into Heaven.* Which cannot be meant of any other Coming than to Judgment, *Rev.* i. 7. *Behold, he cometh with Clouds, and every Eye ſhall ſee him.*

4. This is to make the then State of the Saints a Condition of much Trouble, and liable to Death as well as Indignities: For we find they will meet with Enemies, even *Gog* and *Magog*, who will inviron them to their no ſmall Hurt; for they will meet to give the Saints *Battle*. Tho' we read not of Slaughter, yet it is very plain the Saints will be mortal, and would be ſlain, if Fire from Heaven did not come down to their Deliverance: Or if they be immortal, what need they be afraid of their Enemies? for they could do them no Hurt.

From the whole then I am ready to conclude, there will be no *proper Reſurrection* of Perſons; nor will Chriſt come *perſonally* from Heaven, but only there will be a glorious and beautiful State of the Church for the Space of *a Thouſand Years*; which will be plainer, when we have viewed the Condition of the Church's Enemies in the next Verſe.

5 But the reſt of the Dead lived not again, until the Thouſand Years were finiſhed.——

Where, 1. Their Character. 2. Their Condition. 3. The Time.

1. Their Character, *the reſt of the Dead.* Some underſtand this of the Saints who were not honoured with Martyrdom: But it is plain we are not to oppoſe theſe *Dead* to *Martyrs*, but to *Saints*; becauſe all who are not Sharers of this Reſurrection, called *firſt*, will fall under the Power of the *ſecond Death*, v. 6. and ſo we are to mean theſe *Dead* of them *ſlain*, Chap. xix. 21. And the Senſe is, that Spirit and Temper of the *Beaſt* and the *falſe Prophet*, which was ſlain with themſelves.

2. Their Condition, *lived not again.* It will not jump with the Context to underſtand it of a ſpiritual Life, for that they never had before they were ſlain: But we are to take it in Oppoſition to the Life of Saints; and then the Senſe is plain, the *Spirit* of *Perſecution*, *Envy*, and every evil Way, will not recover itſelf again; becauſe Satan, from whom they have it, will be bound: And therefore *Tyranny*, *Covetouſneſs*, and *Ambition*, will all ly ſopite, and not be found in that Period of the World; for it will then be inhabited by Righteouſneſs.

3. The Time, *until the Thouſand Years were finiſhed, i. e.* all the While deſigned of God for this proſperous State of the Church: For afterwards we find, when Satan is looſed, they do live again, and plague the Saints.

5 ——This is the firſt Reſurrection.

6 Bleſſed and holy is he that hath Part in the firſt Reſurrection: On ſuch the ſecond Death hath no Power; but they ſhall be Prieſts of God and of Chriſt, and they ſhall reign with him a Thouſand Years.

Here we have what is aſſerted both of the State and Perſons.

1. The Character of the State of the Church; *This is the firſt Reſurrection.* All who do not join the *Millenaries*, take this *metaphorically, i. e.* by Way of Reſemblance; yet neither here do the Learned agree, but from their different Views have different Senſes. There are two worth the noticing, 1. Some take it for Converſion, according to that of the Apoſtle, *Eph.* ii. 6. *Who hath raiſed us together in Chriſt*; and, *Riſe up from the Dead*, Chap. v. 14. *If ye then be riſen with Chriſt*, Col. iii. 1. It muſt be owned this Senſe cannot be excluded, for the whole Scope and Context pleads for its being at leaſt a Part of the Meaning: Yet, 2. There is another, very agreeable and juſtifiable, from the Prophets (it being their common Drift by ſuch Terms to bring in the flouriſhing Condition of the Church of God, upon the Back of ſore Adverſity) *Iſa.* xxvi. 19. *Thy dead Men ſhall live, together with my dead Body ſhall they ariſe.* Rom. ii. 15. *What ſhall the receiving of them be, but Life from the Dead?* This is ſpoke of the Converſion of the *Jews*, and their being delivered at once from their hardned and impenitent State, and from their Reproach and Miſery. I ſee not how we can ſpeak according to the Senſe of this Context, if both theſe conſpire not to make up one full Meaning: Nor is it poſſible to find any Thing that hath a greater Congruity with a *proper*

per Reſurrection, than a Church or People emerging from a great Depth of *Adverſity*; and eſpecially if we add thereto their Converſion to God, without which we cannot explain ſolidly what follows, *v.* 6.

This Reſurrection is called the *firſt*, not as if there never had been any Converts before; for God never wanted ſuch from the Beginning: Nor as if the Church in none of her Branches had enjoyed *Proſperity* after Adverſity; for many particular Churches have been bleſt with Deliverances, and yet will be, betwixt this and that Time. But it is called the *firſt*, on theſe Accounts, 1. Of the Generality thereof: There will be ſuch a Number of Believers in that Period, as was never to be matched before; and, in ſo far, it will reſemble the *general* Reſurrection, and, preceeding it, deſerves the Character *Firſt*. 2. There will be as effectual an Eſſay made of the Power of God in this State of the Church, as will be exerted at the *proper Reſurrection*, in raiſing up ſo many Saints at once. 3. It will be the ſureſt Pledge of the *ſecond* Reſurrection, for all that believe in Chriſt will be raiſed up at the laſt Day. The Juſtice of God, in Conjunction with his Power, raiſeth up the Wicked to Puniſhment; but the Faithfulneſs and Mercy of God in Chriſt, determines his Power to the Converſion of ſo many, and bringing them into that happy Condition we have heard of.

II. What is aſſerted of the Perſons; where we have, 1. The Perſons. 2. What is pronounced about them. 3. The Grounds of this favourable Sentence.

1. The Perſons, *that hath Part in the firſt Reſurrection*: Which ſignifies no more than to be a Portioner; *Thou haſt neither Part nor Lot in this Matter*, ſaid *Peter* to *Simon*, Acts ii. 21. This is very comfortable to theſe who ſhall not have the Happineſs to ſee theſe gladſom Days of the Son of Man; for, if they be regenerate, they are in ſo far Portioners thereof, and ſo in an happy State and Condition, tho' it muſt be owned their Satisfaction will be doubled who are then alive.

2. What is pronounced anent them, *They are bleſſed and holy*. Of both theſe we ſpoke before; of the *firſt*, on *Chap.* xix. 9. of the *ſecond*, Chap. xviii. 20. It may alſo be advanced here, as the great *Criterion* of the *Portioners* of *this Reſurrection*, that they are *holy*, without which they cannot conclude favourably of themſelves.

3. The Grounds of this Declaration, 1. *On ſuch the ſecond Death ſhall have no Power*; explain'd, *Chap.* ii. 11. 2. *They ſhall be Prieſts of God, and of Chriſt*; explain'd, *Chap.* i. 6. This is not ſo to be underſtood, as if never any had been ſo before; But to ſhew there will be an Harmony betwixt this laſt Period of the Church, and her firſt and pureſt Age. 3. *They ſhall reign with him a Thouſand Years*; of this, *v.* 3.

From the Whole, I conclude, there are *glorious Days of the Son of Man* coming upon Earth. 'Tis true, it is not ſaid in this Paſſage, they were to *reign with Chriſt upon Earth*; yet there is ſo much ſaid in the Context, as I think neceſſarily eſtabliſheth it: For, 1. It is ſaid, the Angel came down from Heaven to bind Satan; then it is plain this Tranſaction was below: And, where ſhould it be but on Earth, where the *Dragon* was caſt out? *Chap.* xii. 9. 2. The Deſign of this Binding was, that *Satan* might deceive the Nations no more: This, to be ſure, is meant of the Earth; for we read not of Nations any where elſe. 3. Upon the looſing of Satan, it is ſaid, Gog *and* Magog *went up on the Breadth of the Earth, and encompaſſed the Camp of the Saints*. Whence, it is plain, the *Saints* and their *Camp* are to be upon Earth; and conſequently, all this Paſſage is to be meant of the Earth.

We come next to the Looſing of Satan, and the Effects thereof, which makes the third Part of this Chapter, in the following Words,

7 And when the Thouſand Years are expired, Satan ſhall be looſed out of his Priſon.

8 And he ſhall go out to deceive the Nations, which are in the four Quarters of the Earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to Battle: The Number of whom is as the Sand of the Sea.

9 And they went up on the Breadth of the Earth, and compaſſed the Camp of the Saints about, and the beloved City:——

This is a moſt gloomy Scene, and the rather that it falls in immediately after ſo *glorious* a State of the Church; for it falls in after the Thouſand Years are expired, or, as it may be rendred, *that Thouſand Years*; ſo that it is the ſame Thouſand Years wherein Satan was bound, and the Church flouriſhed. This will be one of the moſt diſcouraging Interruptions ever the Church met with. The Cauſe of all this is,

the Looſing of *Satan out of his Priſon.* We ſpoke of the *Binding of Satan*, v. 2. where we ſhewed it will probably be carried on by ſeveral Steps: It would appear juſt we have the ſame Thoughts of his *Looſing*; that it will not be all at once, but by Degrees; but how long Time it will conſume to ſet him quite looſe, ſeeing it is not revealed, we may not enquire. Only, 'tis plain, the Reſtraints will be taken off: He does not break Priſon, for that he could not do; But when Chriſt has gathered in his Elect, then that great and implacable Enemy will be let looſe to make his laſt Appearance in the World: This is what the Church ſhould lay her Account with; for it is ſaid, he *ſhall* be looſed. Here we are further to conſider, 1. Theſe whom Satan will influence. 2. Their conjunct Deſign. 3. Their Expedition.

I. We have Satan's Aſſociates, whom he will influence; where we may notice, 1. His Methods. 2. Theſe they carried off. 3. Their Number.

1. His Method, *He ſhall go out to deceive the Nations, which are upon the four Quarters of the Earth.* We ſpoke of *deceiving* on, *v.* 3. the ſame Senſe will obtain here: All theſe Privileges the Church enjoyed while Satan was bound, will be ſnatched from her, and the Reverſe thereof come in their Room. Yet there are a few Particulars to be further noticed here: As, 1. We are not to imagine all the World will be upright Saints at this Time; for there ever was, and ever will be Tares among the Wheat: But, if they were not ſerious, yet they would not make any open Oppoſition to the Kingdom of Chriſt all that Time. It is preſumable, about the End of that Thouſand Years, there will ariſe a Multitude of hollow-hearted Hypocrites, and even ſome of perverſe Spirits and Principles, which however they may conceal, till a fit Opportunity offer for diſcovering the latent Malice of their Hearts; which now, upon the *Looſing* of Satan, they will meet with, exactly fitted to their Purpoſe. 2. It is ſaid, *Satan ſhall go out*; *i. e.* he will make Uſe of his Enlargment to the greateſt Diſadvantage of the Church: For he will leave no Stone unturn'd, to work Wo thereto; as the next Clauſe plainly expreſſeth, and as was ſaid, *Chap.* xi. *Becauſe he knew his Time was ſhort*, therefore he will be *in great Wrath*; which will hold perfect here. 3. On whom he will work, in two Expreſſions; the one more obſcure, *Nations*, which we are to take in the ſame Senſe, as *v.* 3. yet not for the ſame Perſons; for it may be well concluded, a great many of thoſe who have flouriſhed during the Courſe of *that Thouſand Years*, will be aſleep before this; yet we may underſtand it of their Iſſue, who, tho' nearly related to the Saints by Blood, yet as much eſtranged from them in Spirit, and therefore the fitter for *Satan* to gain on. The other Expreſſion is more plain, *Which are upon the four Quarters of the Earth.* It will come to the ſame, whether we underſtand it of *Europe*, *Aſia*, *Africa*, and *America*, which are comprehenſive of all the Earth; or thereby mean the four cardinal Points in the *Compaſs*, *Eaſt*, *Weſt*, *South*, and *North*, which I own to be more ſcriptural; yet both of them are equally broad and wide. However, we are not ſo to underſtand this, as if all the World will be led aſtray by *Satan* at this Time; for afterwards we read of Saints, and that they had a *Camp upon the Earth.* I own, the Expreſſion ſays, They will be more numerous than the Saints; which is alſo proven from this, that the Saints perſonally will not be able to engage them, for they are only to act *defenſively*: And therefore it is ſaid, *Fire will come down from Heaven, and conſume the Enemy.* And ſo I think we cannot properly underſtand this of any *One* or *Two* ſeveral Sorts of People that will yield to Satan's Deluſions, but of ſome, yea, of many in every Nation will be decoyed by his Wiles. It ſeems the Church will be then as hardly beſtead as ever.

2. The *Characters* of this deluded Multitude, *Gog* and *Magog*. This is juſtly owned by all to be one of the moſt difficult and puzzling Paſſages in this Prophecy, the Solution of which has imployed the Learned in all Ages, and has produced very various Thoughts, which it will be very needful we glance at, in order to get further Light.

(1.) Some, by *Gog* and *Magog*, underſtand *Papiſts* and *Mahometans*, and fix upon diſtinct Periods for each, *viz.* the *Mahometans* at the Beginning of the *Ottoman* Empire in the Year One thouſand three hundred and ten; this they make to be *Gog*: And *Magog* to be the Papiſts under that Period of their Tyranny, which began with the *Papacy* of *Boniface* VIII. in the Year One thouſand two hundred and ninety four; of which Pope it was ſaid, *He came to the Papal Chair like a Fox, reigned like a Lion, and died like a Dog.* This Opinion is ſtoutly defended by a great many, but it evidently croſſeth the Threed of the Prophecy; for both the Power of the *Pope* and *Mahomet* will be deſtroyed a Thouſand Years before this come to paſs: Beſides, it is not poſſible to find a Thouſand Years Peace and Proſperity in the Church before this; for it cannot be ſaid with any Colour of Reaſon, that *Satan* was bound before *Conſtantine's* Time, and has been as looſe ſince, as ever he was before. Again, both *Mahometaniſm*

niſm and *Popery* deſerved the Character of *Gog* and *Magog*, as much before the Period condeſcended on, as ever they did ſince.

(2.) Others, by *Gog* underſtand *Satan*, and by *Magog* his *Angels*: And ſo all theſe make an Army of *Devils* let looſe upon the Church, after he and his Angels were turned out of Heaven by *Michael* and his *Angels*, Chap. xii. The Conſideration of what was ſaid on the Place, is Confutation of this Fancy. Nor is it ſaid, that *Satan* was bound when vanquiſhed by *Michael*, or yet that he was impriſoned; and therefore we may reject this.

(3.) Others flee to *Criticiſms* on the Words Γωγ and Μαγωγ: The firſt they make to ſignify *hidden* or *ſecret*, and the other *open* and *apparent*; and ſo the Senſe will be, the Church ſhall be attack'd by ſecret and open Enemies. This is the Thought of ſeveral *Papiſts*, and gone into by not a few *Proteſtants*. But this Way of *grammatically* ſolving Difficulties, is little regarded by the Learned: And, after all, it is not *Gog* in the *Hebrew*, but *Gag*; nor is it agreed what Language *Gog* is, and as little what it ſignifies, and therefore no Regard can be had to it.

(4.) Some fetch the Meaning of this from *Scripture* (which to be ſure is the ſafeſt Way) yet even then it is not eaſy to fix the true Senſe of it. We read of *Magog the Son of* Japhet, *Gen.* x. 2. who, ſome contend, was the Father of many Nations, and among others of the *Scythians* and *Tartars*: But we have no credible Authority for this Progreſs, and therefore muſt leave it among the *Lengends* of Antiquity, on which nothing with Certainty can be built: But, grant this ſhould hold, it will only ſay, that *Gog* is we know not who, but *Magog* is the *Grand Turk*: and yet we are ſure he is to fall a Thouſand Years before this *Magog* ariſe. If it be ſaid, There is a Succeſſion of Enemies from the Son of *Japhet* to the Day of Judgment, which were ſuppreſt during the Thouſand Years, but not extinguiſhed; yet how they make out this, I ſee not, unleſs we take their Word for it: For, among all the Genealogies of the Poſterity of *Noah*, we meet with no more of this *Magog*, nor of any of his Children, but that twice he is called the Son of *Japhet*, 1 Chron. i. 5. and therefore we can make nothing of that Text from *Geneſis*. We read again in *Ezekiel*, of both *Gog* and *Magog*, Ezek. xxxviii. 1. *Chap.* xxxix. yet even there the Scop is not ſo clear as give much Light: For theſe who by *Gog* and *Magog* underſtand the Enemies of the *Jews*, defeat all this Project, becauſe we find they were to be ſlain after the Reduction of the *Babyloniſh* Captivity. And whether they ſignify the *Perſians*, *Medes*, *Seleucidæ*, or others condeſcended on, they were all cut off, as will plainly appear from *Ezek.* xxxix. 11, &c.

(5.) Laſtly, Others go cloſſer to Work, and make that Paſſage in *Ezekiel* refer to this Period of the World *John* is ſpeaking of, and ſo it is the ſame *Gog* and *Magog* pointed at in both. Yet there is a great Difference betwixt them; tho' they imagine, *John* is only repeating, or reſuming, and not alluding to *Ezekiel*: For we find it will take ſeven Years to cut off *Ezekiel*'s *Gog* and *Magog*, and ſeven Months to bury them, and this was to be done by Men, and probably of other Nations than the *Iſraelites*; whereas this *Gog* and *Magog* comprehends all the unregenerate Part of the World, nor will there be found a ſufficient Force upon Earth to deſtroy them; and therefore God will, in an immediate Manner, avenge his People of them, by Fire from Heaven: Which, in my Opinion, makes a very great Difference betwixt the two Prophecies.

After all, I ſee not how we can fortel who theſe will be, further than the Text informs us, which is but obſcure too; yet theſe few Particulars flow therefrom, 1. They will be puſh'd on by Satan. 2. They will have their *Allies* and *Confederates* in all Quarters of the Earth. 3. Their whole Malice will be directed againſt the Saints of God. 4. They are to be the *laſt Enemies* ever the Church will have. 5. God will cauſe them utterly to periſh in a moſt *immediate* and *terrible* Manner.

Nor can I go in with the Opinion of a late Author, that tho' *Popery* and *Mahometaniſm* will be long deſtroyed before this Time, yet there will be the material Parts of them reſerved as Fire under Embers, which Satan when looſed will blow up into a Flame, and thereby fire all the unregenerate Part of the World. I own indeed it is poſſible; for we ſee Errors more than One thouſand Years old, and ſome of them as long buried, again raked out of their Aſhes, to the no ſmall Trouble of the Church: Yet I think this not probable, becauſe, 1. Here the Names differ; and it ſeems reaſonable to believe, if the Thing were the ſame, the Name would not be changed, eſpecially that the *Devil* gets the Name *Satan* before and after the Thouſand Years. And further it is ſaid, *The reſt of the Dead lived not again till the thouſand Years were finiſhed*; Which ſays plainly, they were to live again, but under another Appearance; and therefore they get another Deſignation. 2. We never find the *Enemies of the Church*, eſpecially if they be *capital*, ever reſume the Shape they ſometime had, after they were once intirely defeat. It was ſo with ſeveral Setts of Idolatry; it was ſo with *Paganiſm*, tho' the ſen-

ſential Parts of it are under *Popery* and *Mahometaniſm*, yet the Frame was much altered, and continues ſo to this Day; and ſo we may expect about *Gog* and *Magog*. 3. Both the *Beaſt* and *falſe Prophet* are in Hell, while this *Gog* and *Magog* are on the Earth; as we ſee, *v.* 10. And therefore I conclude, tho' there will be a great Affinity betwixt the *Beaſt* and the *falſe Prophet*, and this *Gog* and *Magog*; yet they will not be proper *Popery* and proper *Mahometaniſm*. If it be enquired, What Figure they will have? I anſwer, That it is not revealed; But it is highly probable they will be as like the *Gog* and *Magog* mentioned by *Ezekiel*, as *Popery* and *Mahometaniſm* are like old *Babylon*.

3. Their Number, *The Number of them is as the Sand of the Sea*. This ſays they will be exceeding great in Number: We had an Army before, conſiſting of *Two hundred thouſand thouſand*, Chap. ix. 16. but this ſeems to be greater: We find this a common Way of expreſſing a vaſt Number in Scripture, *Gen.* xxii. 17. *I will multiply thy Seed as the Stars of Heaven, and as the Sand which is upon the Sea-ſhore*. Chap. xxxii. 12. *I will make thy Seed as the Sand of the Sea, which cannot be numbred for Multitude*. It is ſaid, *Gen.* xli. 49. Joſeph *gathered Corn as the Sand of the Sea, very much, until he left Numbring, for it was without Number*.

II. The Deſign, *To gather them to Battle*. We had this Expreſſion before, *Chap.* xvi. 14. the ſame Senſe will take Place here. But ſome tell us, It ſignifies neither leſs nor more than what is expreſſed in the former Clauſe, *He went out to deceive the Nations*. Yet it is very plain they are diſtinct Acts; for to *deceive* is properly to ſeduce from the Knowledge of the true God, and cauſe them to wander in the Maze of Error; and, being thus led out of the Way, to blow up their Minds with Hatred of the Saints of God; and, conſequential to this, to ſet them upon Meaſures to root out the Church, from the Face of the Earth: And therefore, in this *gathering* there ſeems to be comprehended both *Cunning* and *Cruelty*. I ſhewed before, the Word *Battle* does not ſignify one ſingle Scuffle, or Engagement, but a continued State of War; as is plain from their Expedition in the next Verſe, which is the

III. Thing, which we have in two very remarkable Steps;

1. *They went up upon the Breadth of the Earth*. Where we are to view,

(1.) *The Earth*, by which ſome mean that Part of the habitable Earth occupied by the Church; but we find *Earth* manifeſtly diſtinguiſhed from that in the Text, when the Church is called a *Camp* and *City*. Others again by *Earth* underſtand *Aſia*; but I ſhewed before, on *Chap.* x. it never comes under that Senſe, but when it is oppoſed to Sea; and therefore it is not to take Place here. It would appear it is to be taken in the ſame Senſe here, as in the preceeding Verſe, and ſo it will ſignify the whole habitable Earth.

(2.) *The Breadth*. Some take this as a *Geographical* Term, in Oppoſition to *Longitude*, which we are told by *Geographers* is the Diſtance of all Places from the *Æquator*; an *imaginary Line*, dividing the Earth into two equal Parts, *North* and *South*. But we do not find the Spirit of God ſpeaking in this Language, which ought to be our Rule. Now, according to Scripture, it ſignifies the Space employed by any Thing, *Iſa.* viii. 8. *The ſtretching forth of his Wings ſhall fill the Breadth of thy Land, O* Immanuel. *Hab.* i. 6. *And I will raiſe up the* Chaldeans, *that bitter and haſty Nation, which will march through the Breadth of the Land*. In both which Places, by *Breadth* we are to underſtand the whole Land: We are ſure they will be a very numerous Hoſt, which no Part will be free of, but they will extend themſelves both broad and wide.

(3.) *They went up*, or aſcended. Here, as in many other Places, the *Preterite* is put for the *Future*; but in the Viſion, the Apoſtle ſaw it to be ſo, which tell us it will be no leſs true in the Accompliſhment. But Expoſitors are not agreed as to the Meaning of this Word: Some tell us, It points at the *Increaſe* and *Growth* of this Army, and the Commanders Power, which roſe from a mean and contemptible Condition, to be very great and formidable; whatever Truth may be in this, the Text doth not declare it: The Word properly points at a local Motion, going from a lower to a higher Part. Others think, this hints at their *Original*, they came from Hell. We are ſure *Satan* came out of *Hell*, and brought thence with him all the Maxims by which they are to act: But the Armies, and their Leaders, however much influenced by the *Devil*, are not infernal *Fiends* themſelves, but earthly Powers, as we ſaw before. They ſeem to be nearer it, who make this a *military Term*, and which we find often in Scripture, 1 *Sam.* xi. 1. Nahaſh *the* Ammonite *came up and encamped againſt* Jabeſh-Gilead. 1 King. 2. 1. *The King of* Aſſyria *went up and beſieged* Samaria. And *Ahab* is ſaid, 1 *King.* 22. 12. *to go up againſt* Ramoth-Gilead. So that the plain Senſe is, They march up in a very *hoſtile* and *orderly* Manner. There is this further in it, That they went willingly, they were not *preſt Men*, but all of them *Volunteers* againſt the Church of God; few Arguments will be ſufficient to engage them to this Enterprize.

If

If ſome think the Force of the Word is not yet exhauſted, I ſhall not oppoſe theſe who ſay they are ſaid to go up, becauſe the Church was on high and elevated; for we read many a Time of the Mountain of the *Lord's Houſe*, and *Jeruſalem* was ſituate high, ſo that it was ſeen at a Diſtance; but this was common to moſt Cities, to be built on riſing Ground.

2. The next Step of their Expedition, they compaſſed the Camp of the Saints about, and the Beloved City; where, 1. The Objects. 2. Their Act.

(1.) The Objects are two, 1. *The Camp of the Saints.* Παρεμβολὴ is generally thought to ſignify a *Camp*: Yet we find it otherwiſe in the New Teſtament; as, *Acts* xxi. 34. it ſignifies a *Caſtle*; *They commanded him to be carried into the Caſtle.* It ſignifies *an Army*, Heb. xi. 34. *Turned to Flight the Armies of the Aliens.* A great many think it ſhould be ſo rendered here. To be ſure, more is meant than a Plot of Ground entrench'd; it will comprehend an *Army* within Lines and proper Fortifications, furniſhed with all neceſſary Wapons for their own Defence, which they had before imploy'd to great Advantage: But, in this Place, their Condition is more ſtraitned, when they are neceſſitate to entrench themſelves, to prevent an Attack which might be of dangerous Conſequence. This Expreſſion ſeems to allude to the *Pilgrimage-State* of the *Jewiſh* Church, who had a perpetual *Camp* from their Departure out of *Egypt*, till they came to the *promiſed Land.* In it we have theſe Things, 1. That they were the weakeſt Party; for, when two Armies of unequal Strength take the Field, this is the neceſſary Expedient uſed by the *weakeſt*, to ſave them from the Attempts of the *ſtronger*, that they fortify themſelves within their Entrenchments, that, if the Enemy ſhall force their Lines, it may be to their great Diſadvantage. 2. They were in a moſt watchful Condition; ſo the very Notion of a *Camp ſuppoſeth* all Methods are taken for their Security; for *Lines*, *Ditches*, &c. ſignify nothing, if they are not defended. 3. They are all cordial and hearty to the Work; none think of Surrender, but are reſolved to ſtand to the utmoſt: For an Encampment ſays, they will not deſert the Cauſe, but, as theſe who have all at Stake, are reſolved either to conquer or fall; a great Evidence of Chriſtian Magnanimity. They ſeem to be out of it, who by this *Camp* underſtand the ſcattered Saints; for, how can theſe be ſaid to form a *Camp*? Nor do I ſee how we can pitch upon any one particular Place of the Earth as the Situation of this Camp; for the Church will be in all the Parts of the Earth, and ſo will their Enemies: It is ſufficient there be an Alluſion to Encampments, tho' there be not a formal taking the Field in one particular Spot of the World. That this Camp is poſſeſſed by Saints, points both at their Quality, and the Ground of the War; and therefore, all in this *Camp* are ſincere Chriſtians, and their Enemies are as oppoſite to them in their Natures, as they are violent in their *Endeavours.*

The next Object is, *The beloved City.* Some incline to make a great Difference betwixt the *Camp* and the *City*; as, that the *one* is the open Fields, fortified only by Lines, Ditches, and other unſtable Munitions; But that by the *City* we are to mean a regular, durable, and almoſt impregnable Fortification. I own, ſome Paſſages of Scripture may be brought to juſtify this Thought; nor ſhall I refuſe but the *City* may have ſome Import in it above that of the Camp: But yet to purſue this too far, might carry us off from the Scope; as has fared with ſome, particularly theſe who by this City mean *Jeruſalem*, which they think the *Jews* will rebuild and inhabit during the Thouſand Years: Of this I gave my Thoughts, and their Grounds, on *v.* 4. Others thereby underſtand *Conſtantinople*, when taken by the *Turks*, about Two hundred and ſixty Years ago: But the Text does not ſay, This City will be taken; only that it is to be encompaſſed or inveſted: For it appears from the next Part of the Chapter, theſe Enemies will be deſtroyed before they accompliſh their Deſigns. Some *Papiſts*, by this *beloved City*, underſtand *Rome*; but another *Papiſt* has ſolidly confuted this: And indeed it may be juſtly called the *hated City*, but not *beloved.* I ſhewed above, that by *City* we are to mean not only an Incloſure by Walls, Gates, Bars, &c. but that eſpecially a City ſignifies the politick Diſpoſition of the Inhabitants, by Immunities, Laws, and Diſcipline; and ſo, by *City*, we are to underſtand the whole Chriſtian Polity, or the Kingdom of Chriſt: And then the *City* will differ from the *Camp* no otherwiſe than a Society uſing all juſt and allowable Methods to defend themſelves from the Violence of Aggreſſors, in the Rules of Prudence and Reſolution, differs from that ſame Society mutually engaged to one another by the ſame common Laws, Rules and Ordinances: So that the *City* reſpects their Conſtitution in the Form of a *Government*; and the *Camp*, their *Endeavours* to ſecure themſelves. This was called the *holy City*, Chap. xi. 2. for the Reaſons there given; and here the Camp is called *holy*, or the *Camp of Saints*, for the ſame Reaſons. Hence the Deſign of the Enemy caſts up; they meant nothing leſs than to cut off, and root out the Church from being a Nation; to over-

throw her Walls, break down her Gates, yea, and *raze the very Foundations*, Pſal. cxxxvii. 7. I refuſe not but the Church has the Name of a *City*, with Alluſion to the City of *Jeruſalem*; and is here deſigned *beloved*, becauſe of God's Favour thereto, and his Complacency therein, even when her Condition is at the loweſt. This is a ſufficient Antidote againſt the Hatred of *Satan*, *Gog* and *Magog*.

(2.) Their Act, *They compaſſed about*. This ſometimes ſignifies to go about; as, *Heb.* xi. 30. *The Walls of* Jericho *were compaſſed about ſeven Days*. From whence ſome take Occaſion to put different Meanings upon this Word, *viz.* That they marched round about the *Camp* and *City*, but did not offer Violence thereto, being ſtruck with Wonder and Aſtoniſhment: Our Wonder may be how any ſhould advance this, after we hear they were gathered to Battle, and accordingly marched forth, for that End. Others ſay, They marched about it, to ſee what Part they might with the greateſt Advantage attack: This ſeems more agreeable. Yet I cannot think there is any Alluſion to the *Iſraelites* compaſſing *Jericho*, tho' I own that *City* was inveſted with the Armies of *Iſrael* beſides the going about it; for I find no Alluſions, properly ſpeaking, to theſe Steps taken by the Lord's People at his Command, when the Prophecy is of the Practice of their Enemies. The Word properly ſignifies to *incloſe*; as we have the Senſe with an Explication by our Lord, *Luke* xix. 43. *The Day ſhall come upon thee, that thine Enemy ſhall caſt a Trench about thee, and compaſs thee round, and keep thee in on every Side*. And ſo we may render it, *to beſiege*, to ſurround with Batteries, that they might deſtroy them; or to *blocade* them, and obſtruct from them all Proviſion or Reinforcemnt, whereby they are ſo hemm'd in, that Famine does the Work of a moſt mercileſs Enemy.

From the whole, we ſee the ſad State that the Church will be in at this Period, without Strength to engage her Enemies, precluded all Way of Eſcape, no Poſſibility to better her Condition, or yet to hold long out; All Help fails her, her only Relief is the Faithfulneſs and Power of her Lord.

I ſee not how we can underſtand this of any particular Church, whether in *France*, *Holland*, *England*, &c. as ſome incline to apply it; for it deſigned to repreſent the common Condition of the *Catholick* Church. And as little can I believe this Period is over, as others contend; for we have no Account of any ſuch miraculous Deliverance as we find mentioned in the next Part of the Chapter; nor of ſuch an intire Overthrow as is repreſented to us there: Here the whole Enemies of the Church will be clapt under the Hatches at once. But we proceed to conſider the ſame more particularly.

9 ——And Fire came down from God, out of Heaven, and devoured them.

10 And the Devil that deceived them, was caſt into the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, where the Beaſt and the falſe Prophet are, and ſhall be tormented Day and Night, for ever and ever.

Here we have a notable Step of God's Salvation to his Church, in the Deſtruction of his Enemies: Where we are to notice, 1. The Judgment upon *Gog* and *Magog*. 2. The Judgment of *Satan*.

I. The Judgment of *Gog* and *Magog*: Where, 1. The Cauſe. 2. The Effect.

1. The Cauſe, *Fire came down from God out of Heaven*. Some take this to be meant of the prevailing of the Goſpel, becauſe we read at the Beginning, the *Holy Ghoſt* deſcended like *Fire*; but it is not ſaid *that Fire* deſtroyed any. Nor does it ſeem fair, when the plain Scope of the Text points at the final Overthrow of the moſt wicked Enemies of *God's Church*, to underſtand it of their *Converſion*: They might as well take the Deſtruction of *Sodom* for the Converſion thereof; for the Expreſſions are almoſt the ſame, *Gen.* xix. 24, &c. *The Lord rained Fire and Brimſtone upon* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *from the Lord out of Heaven*: To which I have no doubt but the Prophet here alludes. Others, by this, would have the Ruin of the *Turkiſh Empire* to be deſigned: But we have proven that will be over long before. And ſome tranſpoſe theſe Words, and make them to fall in after the laſt Judgment, and ſo it will make a figurative Account of the Torments of the Damned: But this is a dangerous Way of *interpreting* Scripture; Nor do I ſee what they can bring in to ſupport this Thought, that what is mentioned before the Day of Judgment, is to fall out after it. Beſides, we never read of Hell in theſe Terms of *Fire coming out of Heaven*, but of the Perſons being caſt into Hell, or the Lake of Fire. This therefore muſt be underſtood of ſome

Stroke

Stroke upon *Gog* and *Magog*, antecedent to their Damnation; as we find Scripture ſpeaking of *Gog*, Ezek. xxxviii. 22. *I will plead againſt him with Peſtilence, and with Blood: And I will rain upon him, and his Bands, and upon the many People that are with him, an overflowing Rain, and great Hail-ſtones, Fire and Brimſtone.* The ſame is threatned againſt *Magog*, Ezek. xxxix. 6. *I will ſend Fire on* Magog, *and among them that dwell careleſly in the Iſles.* Some again incline to take this in the ſame Senſe with the *Fire* that proceeded out of the *Mouths* of the two *Witneſſes*, Chap. xi. 5. but there is a manifeſt Difference; for there we ſhewed all was in Threatning and Prophecy, but here is Execution; there *Fire* came out of their *Mouths*, here it comes from *God*.

I own it very hard, if not impoſſible, to condeſcend upon the Nature of this Plague, eſpecially that we find Judgments come under this Deſignation, even tho' they be common, *Pſal.* xi. 6. *Upon the Wicked he ſhall rain Snares, Fire and Brimſtone, and an horrible Tempeſt; this ſhall be the Portion of their Cup.* Some think it will be ſuch a Judgment as befell the Army of *Sennacherib*, Iſa. xxxvii. 36. *The Angel of the Lord went forth, and ſlew of the* Aſſyrians *an Hundred fourſcore and five thouſand.* Yet there we have no Mention of *Fire from Heaven.* Others tell us, God will ſend a fiery Spirit of *Faction* amongſt them, and that they will turn their Arms againſt one another. I cannot ſay there is Ground for this Thought either, tho' that, as well as other Methods mentioned, might work their Ruin. But, whatever Way it will be brought about, there are theſe few Things in their Miſery; 1. It will be ſudden, and moſt unexpected. 2. It will be moſt painful, as Burning is. 3. They will not be capable to account for it by the Courſe of ſecond Cauſes. 4. The Church will be Witneſſes of, but not Actors in this Tragedy. 5. It will be terrible.

2. The Effect, *It ſhall devour them*, or *eat them up.* It will then be a deſtroying Stroke. It will be no Relief to them, *Satan* deceived them; for they ſhould not have yielded to his Solicitations. Tho' he was at the Bottom of the Sin of our firſt Parents; yet they were not abſolved, but paid dear for their Tranſgreſſion: Juſt ſo will it be at the Time here ſpoken of.

II. The Judgment of Satan their great Tempter, *v.* 10. Where we are to notice, 1. The Perſon. 2. The Miſery he is condemned to.

1. The Perſon, deſcribed by his Name, *The Devil*; of which on *v.* 2. None contend it is to be meant of the *Grand Turk* there; and as little Reaſon is there for that Thought here. Again, he is deſcribed by his Exerciſe, *That deceived them*; of which on *v.* 3. All the Miſchief that Satan does will at length fall on himſelf. This cannot agree to the *Turk*, nor indeed to any other earthly Enemy; for they are all deceived.

2. His Miſery: Where we have to notice theſe Things;

(1.) The Place, *He was caſt into the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone.* We explained this, *Chap.* xix. 20. and proved it to ſignify an utter Deſtruction; and being under Neceſſity to underſtand it ſtill with Reference to theſe that are caſt into it, we will be obliged to alter its Senſe; for the *Beaſt* and the *falſe Prophet* being Conſtitutions, when they are finally extirpate, are ſaid to be *damned*, or caſt into the *Lake*, &c. yet theſe are inſenſible of Miſery. The ſame may be ſaid of *Death* and the *Grave*, v. 14. of this Chapter; but when this is ſpoke of the *Devil* and the *Wicked*, which are capable of Senſe, it is to be taken in a moſt proper Senſe for the Place of the Damned: And therefore we are to mean this of that Place of Torment prepared for the Devil and his Angels; which will be plain from this Clauſe of the Text, that there *he will be tormented for ever and ever.* Some tell us, *Satan* will not be ſent to Hell till the Day of Judgment. This I take to be uncertain; for the laſt Judgment ſeems to be deſigned mainly for Mankind, and ſo *Satan* and his *Angels* may be in *Hell* before that, which I think this Text plainly declares. Others again ſay, *Satan* was ſent to Hell long ſince, yea, even from his Fall. 'Tis true, as ſoon as *Satan* fell he was caſt out of Heaven, and ſo may be ſaid to be in Hell; yet it is as true, his Torments were light in Compariſon of what they will be afterwards: Moſt of his Miſery hitherto conſiſts more in Deprivation of Happineſs, but then there will be added real Sorrow and Torment. This all the Devils know of, *Matth.* viii. 29. *Art thou come hither to torment us before the Time?*

(2.) His Companions in Miſery, *The Beaſt and the falſe Prophet*, i. e. *Popery* and *Mahometaniſm*, who were condemned before a thouſand Years and more; and the Profeſſors and Supporters of theſe Abominations will be in the ſame Place with him: Theſe had ſinned with Satan, and then will Satan ſuffer with them. This no doubt will much aggravate all their Miſeries, when they can read one anothers Guilt in their own Torments; then will they have as great Averſion to other, as ever they had Kindneſs, while they conſpired againſt the Church of Chriſt.

(3.) The Nature of their Punishment, *And shall be tormented Day and Night for ever.* This comprehends *Satan*, the *Beast*, and *false Prophet*; all of them are in the same Plunge of Misery, which is very great, from these Things in the Text; 1. *They shall be tormented.* This expresseth a notable Pain, with the greatest Uneasiness, from a most exquisite Sense; but what the Nature of it is, which affects Spirits, is what we cannot know, but from the Comparisons in this and other Places of Scripture: Only we may be sure of this, they will feel it as heartily as our Bodies feel Burning, and it be as unpleasant as the Fire of Brimstone is to our Senses. 2. It will be without Intermission, *Day and Night.* There is no Day in Hell, all is Darkness, yea, utter Darkness: But it is a *proverbial* Speech, and signifies constantly, as we saw before, *Chap.* vii. 15. and, *Chap.* xii. 10. 3. It will be eternal, *For ever and ever.* The Expression is most significant, *For Ages of Ages*: Their Sorrows will never have an End, and they will never want the Sense of them.

The last Part of the Chapter gives us a View of the last Judgment: Where we have, 1. The Preparation, *v.* 11. 2. The Procedure of this August Court, *v.* 12. and 13. 3. The Execution, *v.* 14. and 15.

11 And I saw a great white Throne, and him that sat on it, from whose Face the Earth and the Heaven fled away, and there was found no Place for them.

In this are, 1. The Throne. 2. The Possessor. 3. The Effect of his Appearance.

1. The Seat, *A great white Throne.* Some think, because this Seat is called *Throne*, we are not to mean the Day of Judgment by this Passage, but the Conversion of the *Jews.* *Brightman* values himself on this rare Discovery: But if a Throne signify not only a Chair of State, but a Tribunal of Justice, that Notion will fall, *Psal.* ix. 4. *Thou satst in the Throne judging right.* Prov. xx. 8. *A King that sitteth in the Throne of Judgment, scattereth away all Evil with his Eyes.* It will appear the *Throne* here mentioned is of that Kind. In this same Chapter, these *Thrones* mentioned, *v* 4. seem plainly to be *Thrones of Judgment.* That the *Throne* is mentioned before the *Sitter* thereon, is not because it was more observable than he, but because it leadeth to high Thoughts of him. Some think it is no more but the *white Cloud* we heard of, *Chap.* xiv. 14. and that what to the Prophet, then at a greater Distance, seem'd to be a *Cloud*, now discovered itself to be a *Throne.* We cannot doubt but the Sitter is the same in both, yet will not this prove the *white Cloud* and the *Throne* to be the same, for they are plainly distinct Visions, and to different Purposes: Nor indeed is there any further Agreement betwixt them than this, That Christ was beginning to discover his Wrath while on the *Cloud*, but here is to be the last End of it, to the eternal Destruction of his Enemies. We have no Account of the Matter whereof this *Throne* was made; but, seeing we are sure he is to come in the Clouds, this may be a *cloudy Throne.* Its Adjuncts are, 1. *Great*, i. e. very observable, and of a distinguishing Nature. This Character is not given to the *many Thrones*, v. 4. which shews us this is greater than them all, and no Wonder, when *all Judgment is committed to him* that *sits on it.* 2. *White.* This is a Colour used to express *Glory*, as in the History of the *Transfiguration.* It is also an Emblem of *Purity, Holiness and Justice*, Psal. lxxxix. 14. *For Justice and Judgment are the Habitation thereof, and Mercy and Truth go before his Face.* So that, from this Description of the *Throne*, we are sure nothing can escape him; his Light will bring above Board all the hidden Works of Darkness, he will try and search to the utmost.

2. The *Occupier* of this Throne, *I saw him that sat on it.* There is no *Name* given him; some think, because his Name is ineffable, as, *Chap.* xix. 12. *He had a Name written which no Man knew but himself.* We are sure it was none else but *our Lord Jesus Christ*, and is called God in the next Verse. He is now *invisible*, but then he will be *visible* in his Humane Nature, so that every Eye shall see him, and even they that pierced him.

3. The Effect, *From whose Face the Earth and the Heaven fled away, and there was found no Place for them.* This Clause has startled a great many, nor is the Difficulty small. Some think, the Sense of this is to be fetched from the Apostle *Peter*, 2 Pet. iii. 7,---10. *But the Heavens and the Earth which are now, by the same Word of God are kept in Store, reserved unto Fire against the Day of Judgment. -----In the which the Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat: The Earth also, and the Works that are therein, shall be burnt up*

up. But then a Difficulty ſtarts up, If the Earth and the Heavens vaniſh away, what ſhall become of the *Reſurrection*? Becauſe the Bodies of both the Saints and Wicked are in the Earth; and we find, *v.* 12. they are called out of their Graves, and out of the Sea: So that, if theſe are removed, and cannot be found, whence ſhould all theſe come? This has been very choking to many, and therefore, to get rid of this *Labyrinth*, they tell us, There muſt be a Tranſpoſition of this Part of the Verſe, and make it fall in after the Deſcription of the Day of Judgment. Were this Method juſtifiable, it obviates the Difficulty: But then, how can any tell us, This is ſo, and muſt be ſo? *Can we by ſearching find out God?* We may much ſooner find our own Ignorance, than ſearch the deep Things of God; and we had better own our Ignorance, than take ſuch a wretched Shift. This is a *prophetick* Expreſſion, and therefore is not to be underſtood *literally*, as they contend, but may ſimply ſignify this, That when Chriſt comes to judge the World, his Glory will be ſuch, as will intirely obſcure all created Glory, whether in the Earth or Heaven; and tho' neither the Earth or the Heavens quit their Stations, yet they will be ſo outſhined by Chriſt, that they will be no more regarded than if they had fled. We have Expreſſions of this Nature, which theſe Authors are not inclinable to take *literally*; as, *Chap.* vi. 14. *The Heavens departed as a Scroll when it is rolled together.* And, *Chap.* xvi. 20. *Every Iſland fled away, and the Mountains were not found.* This laſt is to fall out under the *ſeventh Vial*, and therefore long before the Day of Judgment. The laſt Clauſe of the Text ſeems to plead this Acceptation of the Words, *There was found no Place for them.* If we take this *literally*, it will prove they were not only removed out of their Place, but *annihilate*, which none of them alledge: So that it is ſafeſt to take it *prophetically*, and then it illuſtrates the Glory of Chriſt's Appearance. If any challenge why the Earth is mentioned before the Heavens? It may be by Way of Gradation, becauſe the *heavenly* Bodies are more glorious than the *earthly*; and ſo the Earth is begun at, being the leaſt glorious. We had an Expreſſion not much different, *Chap.* xii. 8. where it is explained.

Next we have the Procedure of this ſolemn Court, which naturally ſplits itſelf into two Parts, according to the Nature of theſe ſiſted before this Tribunal, which are either theſe alive, *v.* 12. or theſe really dead, *v.* 13.

12 And I ſaw the Dead, ſmall and great, ſtand before God, and the Books were opened: And another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life: And the Dead were judged out of thoſe Things which were written in the Books, according to their Works.

We are to diſcuſs a preliminary Queſtion, *What is to be meant by thoſe Dead?* Becauſe the two Verſes plainly diſtinguiſh the *Dead* into two Sorts; One, *v.* 12. which we hear not whence they came: Another, *v.* 13. of whom we have a Diſtribution from their ſeveral *Repoſitories*, the *Sea*, *Death* and *Hell*. I cannot think theſe two Claſſes are the ſame, eſpecially that we have ſuch a ſhort Deſcription of this great and finiſhing Work of Chriſt upon the Earth: Nor will it be very ſafe to affirm, what is more generally deduced, *v.* 12. is particularized *v.* 13. for I have not found any uſeleſs Clauſe in the whole of this Prophecy, tho' many a Time we are at a Loſs how to apply them.

I judge there is a notable Diſtinction here: For, *v.* 12. we have no Note of *Univerſality* prefix'd, that *all the Dead* ſtood before God: And we read of others alſo *dead* in the next Verſe; ſo that there is a Difference betwixt the two Sorts of *Dead*. Again, we read of no *Reſurrection* concerning them, *v.* 12. nor have we any Expreſſion equivalent thereto, as we meet with in the next Verſe; and therefore, if we ſhould allow the firſt Sett of the Dead not to have *riſen*, but to be *changed*, and to think that the Dead in the next Verſe were really raiſed again, it will not croſs the *Phraſeology* of the Text; and it will facilitate the Explication of both *Verſes*, for the 12 *v. ſiſts* the Living *without* a Reſurrection, and the 13 *v. ſiſts* the *Dead* after their *Reſurrection*. There is only this Difficulty caſts up from the Apoſtle *Paul*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 15. *We which are alive and remain unto the Coming of the Lord, ſhall not prevent them which are aſleep.* And yet more expreſly afterwards, *v.* 16, 17. *The Dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt: Then we which are alive and remain ſhall be caught up together with them.* Whence it may be thought to follow, that the *Reſurrection* of the *Dead* will preceed the *Tranſmutation* of the *Living*; which ſeems to deſtroy all this Notion.

I ſhall not be ſtiff in the Diſpute, but only offer what I think may purge it of this formidable Objection, in theſe Particulars; 1. Tho' both the *Apoſtles* ſpeak of the ſame Thing, the *laſt Judgment*; yet they have not the ſame formal Conſideration thereof: The Apoſtle *John* ſpeaks of the laſt Judgment as it concerns the whole Race of *Adam*, whether *Elect* or *Reprobate*; whereas the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks only in Reference to the *Elect*, and not one Word of the *Reprobate*; which makes a very notable Difference: For the Dead are ſuch as ſleep in Chriſt, and the Living are ſuch as are to be *caught up to meet the Lord in the Air, and are ever to be with him*; Both which are certainly his own Flock. Our *Apoſtle* here, whether becauſe it had been treated of by the other, or for what other Reaſon we are not to enquire, takes leſs Notice of the *Elect*, and inſiſts moſt upon the Condemnation of the Wicked. 2. The Apoſtle *Paul*, in the objected Place, is not ſpeaking of the *Precedency* of the *Reſurrection* of the *Dead*, to that of the *Tranſformation* of the *Living*; but of the *Priority* of the *Aſcenſion* of the *Living*, to that of theſe really *Dead*. It ſeems to have been a Miſtake in this Church, who lookt for the Day of Judgment in that Age; and they, purſuing theſe Thoughts, might think ſuch as were *alive* at that Time would get a conſiderable Start of their *dead Brethren*, whoſe *Reſurrection* would conſume ſome conſiderable Time before they were in equal Readineſs with them; which Miſtake he is at Pains to correct: Whereas the *Prophet* here may be allowed to hint at the Change of the *Living*, *i. e.* their being made *immortal*, before he ſpeak of the Riſing of the Dead. 3. The Apoſtle *John* is not handling the Priority or Poſteriority of theſe Events; But as we find it often done in Scripture, and by other Authors, they firſt handle one Part of a Narrative, and then another, tho' both of them be *cotemporary*: Nor have we one Word of Precedency in the two Verſes, and ſo both may be thought to proceed *pari paſſu*. And therefore I go on to conſider this Verſe, as it reſpects the Living at the Day of Judgment;

In which are, (1.) The Parties ſiſted. (2.) The Rules of Judgment. (3.) Their Judgment.

I. The Parties ſiſted, deſcribed, 1. In their general Character. 2. By a particular Diſtribution. 3. From their Poſture.

1. Their general Character, *the Dead*. Some by this underſtand theſe who are *dead* in Treſpaſſes and Sins: But theſe do not take this Paſſage to be meant of the general *Judgment*, but of a notable and univerſal *Converſion* to Chriſt. This Opinion will not hold; for the Throng of theſe Dead are ſent to the Lake of Fire, which is called the *ſecond Death*. Others again, by *Dead*, mean thoſe who are really and naturally dead, but raiſed out of their Graves, *&c.* I own this takes Place in the next Verſe. If it be asked, How comes the Apoſtle to call them dead, if they are alive, and never died a natural Death? I anſwer, This Difficulty will be no leſs pinching to them who ſay they were once *really dead*; for when they roſe and ſtood up, to be ſure they were not *dead*: Nay, comparatively, the *Living* are more dead than theſe are who are raiſed again; for theſe who are raiſed, are by the very Act of *Reſurrection* immortaliz'd; whereas the others are not ſo till they be *changed*: And therefore, if we allow them to be unchanged, when they make their firſt Appearance, they may be truly reckoned dead, when compared with theſe that are raiſed again; Or, if we allow them to be *changed* before their *Appearance* (as I ſee not how any can reaſonably either affirm or deny) then, by vertue of their *Change*, they may be reckoned as much *dead* as theſe who are raiſed from the Dead after their Reſurrection are called *Dead*. However we take *Dead*, we are ſure more are to be judged, than theſe who are really and naturally dead, and thereafter raiſed again; as we find in many Scriptures, *Acts* x. 42. *He was ordained of God to be the Judge both of the Quick and the Dead*. And, 2 *Tim.* iv. 1. *The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the Quick and the Dead*. It is a Scruple with ſome, that becauſe we have not Mention of the *Quick* and the *Dead* in this Paſſage, therefore we are not to underſtand the laſt and general Judgment thereby. But this ſeems hard, eſpecially that we have all Things elſe concurring to give us a lively Diſcovery of that great and terrible Day: And, were it not better to make the *Dead* in this Verſe to comprehend the *Living*, than to do Violence to ſo many evident Documents? and the rather that we read, *Heb.* ix. 27. *It is appointed for Men once to die, and after this the Judgment*. Yet that ſame Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Cor.* xv. 51. *We ſhall not all die, but we ſhall all be changed*. So that certainly theſe who are to be *changed* muſt be met with here ſomewhere; but not in the following Verſe, for there their ſeveral *Dormitories* are condeſcended on, and their *Reſurrection* therefrom mentioned, none of which we have here: Therefore I advance this as the ſafeſt Thought upon the Words, and what has, as the moſt Countenance from Scripture, ſo the feweſt Difficulties.

2. Their particular *Diſtribution* into two very comprehenſive Ranks, *Small and Great*. We had this twice before, *Chap.* xi. 18. and *Chap.* xiii. 16. where I ſhewed it ex-

extends to all Setts and Ranks of Mankind; It takes in the whole Herd of the Children of *Adam* will then be alive on the Earth. Others take it in a more reſtricted Senſe, and underſtand it *phyſically* of their Stature; ſome being *Infants*, and ſome *further advanced*; ſome *ripe*, and others *old* and decrepid with Age. If theſe be laid together, they will be found as broad as long: But, as far as I am penetrate into their Mind, their Deſign is to raiſe Difficulties about the Reſurrection; as, How the Dead ſhall be raiſed? Whether in the ſame Bulk and Stature wherein they died, or in a perfect State of Bulk? The Senſe given does carry us quite by all theſe Difficulties. But, leſt it ſhould be thought this was the Deſign of giving another Turn to the Words, I might allow their Senſe for once to take Place, and prove all theſe are curious and uncertain Queſtions. If we proſecute them by the Touchſtone of Reaſon, we will quickly run ourſelves into the greateſt *Abſurdities* on both Hands: Nor have we any Thing in Scripture that directly notices theſe *Curioſities*, which plainly ſays, the *Spirit of God* did not judge it for Edification to encourage theſe Enquiries, and to aſſure us theſe who travel moſt therein only ſtudy to be wiſe above what is written. The Apoſtle *Paul*, who had this Point fairly in his View, paſſeth over it, and informs us of no more than what is plainly for *Edification*, and attacks theſe Queriſts roundly, 1 *Cor.* xv. 35. *Some Man will ſay, How are the Dead raiſed, and with what Body do they come?* Which he returns with Indignation in the next *Verſe*, *Thou Fool*: And then he proceeds to eſtabliſh the Truth of the *Reſurrection*, and ſhew that the Elect will be without Spot or Wrinkle, *i. e.* they will be exactly perfect both *morally* and *phyſically*. As for that fond Conceit, that all the Children of the Reſurrection will riſe at the *Stature* and Conſiſtency of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, when he roſe from the Dead, at leaſt when he entred on his Miniſtry, which they think they prove from this, *Rom.* viii. 29. *God hath predeſtinate the Elect to be conform to the Image of his Son*; It is alſo vain, and we are ſure the *Conformity* in that Place is not to be underſtood of *Stature*, but of the *new Man*. As for their Notions about *Infants*, they are plainly Enquiries into Things which Eye hath not ſeen: Only it is incontroverted that there is Acceſs for *Children* to Heaven through *Jeſus Chriſt*; But as for the Manner of their *Appearance* after the Reſurrection, we had beſt let it ly in Silence, becauſe the multiplying of Words will but grow to more Ungodlineſs: Nor will ſtrain'd Texts be Excuſe for ſuch unaccountable Boldneſs. Only this we are ſure of, there will be an univerſal Gathering of all, both *Living* and *Dead*, of all *Ranks* and *Ages*, before that awful Judgment-Seat, 2 *Cor.* v. 10. *For we muſt all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt.*

3. Their Poſture, *Stand before God*, *i. e.* before him that ſat on the Throne. There is much Wrangling about this Word *ſtand*, and no Wonder, becauſe it is very variouſly uſed in Scripture, and even in this Prophecy. Sometimes we find Chriſt *ſtanding*, ſo he is called, *Rev.* x. 15. an *Angel ſtanding on the Sea and the Earth*: Where it is a Poſture of *Exerciſe*. Sometimes it points at a Poſture of Attendance and Dependence, *Rev.* xiv. 1. *An hundred and forty and four thouſand ſtood with the Lamb on Mount Zion.* But here the Notion of Judgment obliges us to take it in another Senſe; as to be ſiſted before a *Tribunal* or Judgment-Seat. Yet, ſo it is not always taken in the ſame Senſe: For our Lord makes Standing to import *Innocence*, at leaſt *Uprightneſs*, Luke xxi. 36. *Watch ye therefore, and pray, that ye may be counted worthy to eſcape all theſe Things that ſhall come to paſs, and to ſtand before the Son of Man.* In Oppoſition to this it is ſaid, *Pſal.* i. 5. *The Ungodly ſhall not ſtand in Judgment*; where it is to be taken for *Abſolution*: Whereas all here are to ſtand. Far leſs are we by this Standing to conclude their *Reſurrection*, as a great many do: For, where we read of a Reſurrection, *v.* 13. we have no Account of their *Standing* to prove the Truth thereof, but only that they were judged; And yet we are not to think but they were both ſiſted and convicted before Sentence was paſt. Nor laſtly are they called here to *ſtand*, in order to *defend themſelves*; for there will be no perſonal Defences to produce, which can be of any Stead: Not by the *Righteous*, for the *Judge* will put them beyond the Neceſſity of that, as we ſee in our *Lord*'s Words, *Matth.* xxv. 41, *&c.* He will advance all for them himſelf that needs to be ſaid: Far leſs will the *Wicked* have any Thing to ſay in their Vindication; then their Mouths will be ſtopt: So that here they *ſtand* to be *try'd*. They are all then as *Pannels* before this great Judge, and muſt give an accurate Account of all they have done, as *v.* 13.

Here we have the Parties compearing, but it may be enquired how they were called? The Text ſpeaks nothing of this, further than that a *Compearing* ſuppoſes a *Warning* or *Call*, which in Law is called a *Citation* or Summons. If I ſhould ſay, The Tribunal is extraordinary, and ſo will the Warning be: It is true; for we read 1 *Theſſ.* iv 16. *The Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, and the Trump of God.* So that the Appearance of the *Judge* will be Citation

enough. But yet, besides this, we may find some other Calls; as, 1. The whole World is called to this awful *Tribunal*, by the Voice of a *natural Conscience* upon every Sin, *Rom.* ii. 32. *Who knowing the Judgment, that they who commit such Things are worthy of Death.* So that Nature fists every Man before God, and therefore they are said to be αὐτοκατακρίτοι, *self-condemned*; for *these who sin without the Law, must perish without the Law.* 2. They are called by the *Word* of the *Gospel*, which loudly proclaims *Judgment*, and rings a Pale of Terrors in the Ears of all Hearers: For *their Voice hath gone out into all the World.* 3. They are cited by the *seven Trumpets*, which will be a very loud Call: Nor is it the Fault of the *Judge* they do not advert to the same. 4. They'll be call'd by the *Vials*, the Consequent of which will be the Ruin of *Babylon.* 5. They'll be called by the *over-ruling Power of the Gospel*, for the Space of a Thousand Years, while *Satan* shall be *bound.* 6. They'll be called by the *Judgment of God from Heaven* upon *Gog* and *Magog*, which will not in all Probability be long before the *Consummation* of all Things. Lastly, They will be called by *the Sound of the last Trump*, and by *the Angels*, going from one End of the Earth to the other, gathering them together. These Calls will extend to all, *dead* or *living.*

II. The *Rules* of Judgment, *The Books were opened, and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life.* On *Chap.* iii. 5. we heard in what Sense a Book can be applied to God; where also at Length was explain'd the Book of Life, which would be remembred here, for the same Sense must obtain in both Places: And so here it only remains we speak a little of the other *Books*, as distinct from this *Book of Life*, and then a little of the *Opening* of them.

1. As to the *Books*, they are mentioned indefinitely, they are called here *the Books*: But, seeing there is no Article prefix'd in the *Greek*, we might spare the Particle *the* in the Translation, which seems to bring them in all as *known* or *spoken* of before. 'Tis true, the Matter being of such universal Concern, I see not how any can be blamed, who have searched into the *Meaning* of these *Books*, especially when they take the Light of God's Word along with them. One Rule is of absolute Necessity here to be observed, *That whatever Books we find mentioned in Scripture which bear Relation to the last Judgment, should be listed in this Catalogue*; As,

(1.) The Book of God's revealed Will, contained in the Scripture, comprehending these Duties all Mankind are bound to observe, to whom the Knowledge of this Word came: This will be the *Law* to the *Jews* and their *Prosylites*, as Christ tells them, John v. 45. *There is One that accuseth you, even* Moses *in whom ye trust.* And the *Gospel*, to these honoured with the Revelation thereof, *John* xii. 48. *The Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last Day.* And yet as plainly, *Rom.* ii. 16. *In that Day, when God shall judge the Secrets of Men according to my Gospel.* And so the Procedure is mentioned, *Mark* xvi. 16. *He that believeth not, shall be damned.*

(2.) The Book of God's Will, *revealed in the Heart and Nature of Men*, Rom. ii. 12. *As many as have sinned without the Law, shall also perish without the Law.* v. 14. *When the* Gentiles, *which have not the Law, do by Nature the Things contained in the Law, these having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves.* v. 15. *Which shew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts.* This Book not only tells what they were to do, but the Penalty of not doing, *Rom.* i. 32. *Who knowing the Judgment of God, that they who commit such Things, are worthy of Death; Not only do the same, but have Pleasure in them that do them.*

(3.) The Book of God's *Omniscience*, for he is not capable of Forgetfulness; he perfectly knows all our Strayings, and will be sure to make them open at that Day, *Mat.* xii. 36. *I say unto you, That every idle Word that Men shall speak, they shall give an Account thereof in the Day of Judgment.* And yet more plainly, *Eccles.* xii. 14. *For God shall bring every Work into Judgment, and every secret Thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* This we find expressed, as if *recorded by God*, Isa. lxv. 6. *Behold, it is written before me, I will not keep Silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their Bosom.* All these put together, will help to clear a Question we are to propose in a Page or two.

(4.) The Book of *Conscience*, which will cast up what every Man has done. Some think this improperly a Book; others contend, in *no Sense* it can be called one. I own all the Books (one excepted, *viz.* the Word of *Revelation*) are improperly so called; yet they deserve that Designation, and this as much as any of the other two, and has Countenance from Scripture, *Isa.* xii. 1. *The Sin of* Judah *is written with a Pen of Iron, and with the Point of a Diamond, graven upon the Table of their Heart.* Now many fall upon a Way to stifle their Consciences, that they are like *sealed Books*, which none can read, and themselves will not; but then these Clasps will be broken, and so they will speak plain.

2. What

2. What is ſaid of theſe Books, *they were opened.* It is the ſame Word in both Clauſes; and that it is added to each of them, ſhews not only the Truth of the Fact, but alſo inſinuates an *Equality* of the Evidence among them all. This has a very awful Aſpect upon the Wicked, which ſays, their Sins will be as legible in the Book of God's *Providence* (which I take for the Book of Conſcience) and in that of their own *Conſcience*, as the Duties required are either in the *written Word of God*, or the impreſt Diſcoveries of his Mind upon their *Natures*. As for the Senſe of the Word *Opening*, I own it is not *proper* to the unfolding of a rolled Book, which the Spirit expreſſeth by another Word; yet nothing can be more fit to repreſent the Deſign of the *Holy Ghoſt*; for it ſignifies ſuch an Opening, as expoſes to View all the Contents. It is applied to the *Opening of Heaven*, Acts vii. 56. *I ſee the Heaven opened.* To the *Opening of Doors*, Acts xvi. 27. *Seeing the Priſon-Doors opened.* To a Man's freely telling his Mind, and ſpeaking out what was in his Thought before: So it is ſaid of *Zacharias*, Luke i. 64. *His Mouth was opened immediately.* This Word then tells us, the moſt *ſecret* Things will be publiſhed in the moſt *open Manner*. There are ſome Difficulties behind, which I give my Mind of, in Anſwer to a few Queſtions:

Queſt. 1. Whether the Opening of the ſeveral Books only concerns the Wicked, and the Opening of the Book of Life only concerns the Elect? Some think, and not without Reaſon, that the Sins of the *Elect* will not come in *Remembrance* at that Day, both becauſe, *Mat.* xxv. we have only Mention made of their *Good*, but none of their *Evil*; And alſo, becauſe we find pardoning Mercy in Scripture repreſented by *blotting out of Sin*; *caſting them behind God's Back*, *throwing them into the Deeps of the Sea*; *removing them as far from us, as the Eaſt is diſtant from the Weſt*, &c. We find alſo the Prayers of the Saints to this Purpoſe, *Pſal.* xxv. 7. *Remember not the Sins of my Youth, nor my Tranſgreſſions.* Pſal. lxxix. 8. *O remember not againſt us former Iniquities.* We find this alſo promiſed, *Iſa.* xliii. 25. *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy Tranſgreſſions, for mine own Sake, and will not remember thy Sins.* I own, all theſe have Weight; yet one Conſideration will weaken them all, *viz.* If God mind not their Sins in *Wrath*, to puniſh the Commiſſion thereof, which I ſee not how it can be repelled, and will be juſtified from Scripture, 2 *Sam.* xii. 13. *The Lord hath put away thy Sin*: Yet we find often Remembrance of this Sin afterwards, tho' not to Condemnation; and therefore it is preſumable the Sins of the *Elect* will be propaled at the Day of Judgment. I own the Queſtion to be a *Problem*, and ſo either Part may be taken without any Injury done the *Analogy* of Faith: However, I offer a few Reaſons to ſupport the Poſitive;

1. We find the Sins of the Lord's People in former Times *recorded* in Scripture; and to alledge the Sins of others will not be mentioned, would make theſe *eminent Saints* the greateſt Sinners among the *Pardoned*: And ſo they ſhould labour under a Piece of Diſadvantage; for, being ſo eminently imployed of God, all their Failings being recorded, at leaſt theſe they were guilty of in the Diſcharge of their Duty, while others in no leſs eminent Stations, and I preſume more guilty, have all theirs *buried* in *Forgetfulneſs*, which ſays, it was the Miſery of *Abraham*, *Jacob*, *David*, &c. that they lived before the *Canon* of the Scripture was finiſhed; This is a Concluſion we ought not to hear.

2. The Sins of the Elect will be mentioned then, to commend to them the *Grace of God* in a *Mediator*, which is able to ſave them from ſo much Guilt: As, when a King grants a Remiſſion, it has always ingroſſed in the Boſom thereof the Crime that made them obnoxious, on Purpoſe to exalt the *Clemency* of the *Prince*: For to pardon a Man had never been guilty, would be ſmall Praiſe to his Mercy; but, the greater the Guilt, the more are they obliged to the Forgiver.

3. This will give the laſt and deadly Blow to *Pride*, when not only themſelves, but all the Members of the *auguſt Aſſembly*, ſhall know what they deſerved, and ſee how the *Mercy of God* ſteps in between them and inevitable Ruin; which ſeems to be the Senſe of that Paſſage, *Iſa.* liv. 4. *Thou ſhalt not be put to Shame; for thou ſhalt forget the Shame of thy Youth, and ſhalt not remember the Reproach of thy Widowhood any more*: i. e. They ſhould have no tormenting Senſe of their Sins, like thoſe who know of no Hope or Help; nor would others hear them otherwiſe than as juſt Grounds of magnifying the Riches of *free Grace*, i. e. without any Senſe of Shame.

4. At the ſame Time their Sins are mentioned, their *Faith*, *Repentance*, and *Reformation* will not be forgot; theſe will be expatiate upon, to their great Comfort and Satisfaction. Many now can recount the Sins of God's Saints, to extenuate their own; but never think of their Repentance, whereby they may be ſtirred up to copy after them.

5. The Opening up of their Sins, will be no more for their Infamy, than the recording the Sins of *Abraham*, *Jacob*, *Moses*, &c. are this Day for their Shame, but to commend the Riches of the Grace of God.

6. This will very much expose the Infidelity of the Impenitent, while they see others as *great Sinners*, and it may be *greater* than themselves, received into the everlasting Habitations of Glory, and themselves shut out, merely because they complied not with the Terms of the Gospel, offered to them as clearly as to the rest.

Quest. 2. If the Books are opened in order to found the Sentence after-mentioned according to their Works? Now, If the Elect are not to be judged according to their Works, why are they mentioned? *Answer*, This seems to be the same Question with the former, but in other Terms; and therefore the former Return may suffice. But further, 1. These sinful Works of theirs may be discloſed, tho' not to found a Sentence of Condemnation, yet to convince them how much their Sins had made them obnoxious, if Christ had not interposed; and then, this is for the Glorification of the *Mercy* and *Justice* of God, and to encourage them to spend a whole Eternity in the Praise and Commendation of the Riches of his *free Grace*. 2. They may in some Sense be said to be *judged* according to their Works, because, by Faith, the *Righteousness* of Christ and his Works are made theirs; And then also, they may be said to be judged accord- to the Quality of their own Works in a justified State, being what are made acceptable to God thorow Christ: For there is great Difference betwixt the Grounds of Justification, which can only be the Righteousness of Christ; and the Grounds of Absolution in the final Judgment, which must be our inherent *Holiness*, wrought by the *Spirit of God*.

Quest. 3. Seeing we have Mention made of the *Book of Life*, i. e. the Decree of eternal Election, &c. why not also of that of *Reprobation*, which may as justly be designed the *Book of Death*? *Answ.* 1. The Judgment is not to pass against the Wicked upon the Foot of the Decree of Reprobation, but upon the Ground of their *Demerit*; and so the Decree of *Reprobation* casts not up, till the just Sentence for their Sins be past; for *Condemnation* is a pure Act of *Justice*, so plain and evident, that even the Condemned will be obliged to acknowledge its Equity, Psal. li. 4. *That thou mightst be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest.* 'Tis true, this is the Expression of one of God's Children, but it is upon the Back of a temporal Judgment; and the same, at least equal glaring Evidence, will accompany the final Sentence. 2. The Sentence of *Absolution* is from mere Grace in a *Mediator*: So that, tho' the Ground of the Redeemed's Praise will be great, they will have none of Boasting. Therefore is the *Book of Life* mentioned, that he might bring them back to the Fountain-head of all Grace and saving Mercy, *viz.* the free Love of God, which is the great Spring of the *Covenant of Grace*.

III. The Judgment, *And the Dead were judged out of those Things which were written in the Books*: Where is, 1. The Deed. 2. The Grounds thereof.

1. The Deed; *And the Dead were judged.* The Conjunction καὶ is not to be past here; for this Deed comes in upon the Opening of the Books, and therefore this is not to be meant of a Disquisition before Sentence, but it is the *Result* of a calm and thorow Inquest. It would be lost Labour to spend Time in proving κρίνω to signify to give Sentence, yea, and a final One: Many of the Learned have spent much Travail to make this out; nor have I seen any Thing worth the answering offered against the same. I own it is sometimes taken to *absolve*, and sometimes to *condemn*; which says it must signify both, and will make up its full Sense here; and so it signifies no more than to *pass Sentence*.

2. The Grounds, which are two; 1. *The Things written in the Books*; whence we are sure the Sentence will pass in the Terms of Law: And, as there are several *Books*, and several *Sorts* of *Persons* to fall under the Cognisance of this *solemn Court*, there are Rules fitted for each of them, and such as the *Pannel* cannot object against; for they cannot refuse the Equity, or their Knowledge of the Law. Here 'tis plain the *Jews* will be judged according to the *Law* and the *Prophets*, *Christians* according to the *Gospel*, and all *others* according to the *Law of Nature*.

The next Ground is *according to their Works*. Whence 'tis plain these Works are respective to the Books before-mentioned; which will take in these Things, 1. The Sentence will be just, *Gen.* xviii. 25. *Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?* 2. It will be suitable to the Works of all these sifted; *It will fare well with the Righteous, and ill with the Wicked.* 3. It will be *proportionable* to the Quantity, as well as suitable to the Quality of their Works; as is plain from the Parable of the Talents, *Mat.* xxv. 15. they who do much, will have the more. 4. It establisheth the Connexion be-

betwixt *Doing* and *Receiving*; or, which is the ſame, betwixt *Holineſs* and *Happineſs*.

Object. It would appear, that Works, according to their Nature, are equally the Ground of *Abſolution* and *Condemnation*. This Objection a great many are fond of; yet, for my Share, I have not ſeen its Force, tho' we ſhould grant the whole Demand. Provided, as was ſaid above, we admit the *imputed Righteouſneſs* of Chriſt as the Ground of *Juſtification*, then I ſhall yield all the reſt, *viz.* That good Works or *Holineſs* is one of the Grounds of *Abſolution* at the Day of Judgment: Not as if theſe Works could lay any Claim to that Sentence from their intrinſick Worth; which I never knew any ſtrenuouſly contend for, but they betrayed the Cauſe they eſpouſe; for never any ſaid the *good Works* of a *righteous Man* are as perfect in their Kind, as the *evil Works* of the *Wicked* are in theirs: And therefore, I conceive, all that is ſaid on this Head, is a mere *Logomachy*, or Striſe about Words; becauſe, if our Works be not perfect in themſelves, they muſt borrow their Perfection elſewhere; and that muſt be the Ground of the Sentence, and not the Works themſelves. As for the fooliſh Notion of the *Papiſts*, that our Righteouſneſs concurs with the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, the Wiſer amongſt them are juſtly aſhamed of it; and ſo our Work may be eaſy: For, if we allow *Faith* and *Repentance* in the Abſolved, as I know none that refuſes it, then we may yield, that Merit is as much upon the Side of the Acquitted, as the Condemned: But ſtill the Difference lies here, their Deſert flows from another, but that of the Wicked from themſelves. To inſiſt further, would not anſwer the Deſign of an Expoſitor.

13 And the Sea gave up the Dead which were in it, and Death and Hell delivered up the Dead which were in them, and they were judged, every Man according to their Works.

Here we have the Procedure of this ſolemn *Judicature*, with Reſpect to theſe *really dead*, and *raiſed again*. That this Verſe is meant of the *ſecond* and *general Reſurrection*, ſeems beyond all Debate, if we conſider a Paſſage related by this ſame Apoſtle from our *Lord*'s Mouth, *John* v. 25. where he ſpeaks of the *firſt* and ſpiritual Reſurrection, of which we heard on *v.* 5. of this Chapter, in theſe Words, *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, The Hour is coming, yea now is, when the Dead ſhall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that hear ſhall live.* This is owned by all to be underſtoood, not of the *Reſurrection* of the Body, but of the *Renovation* of the Soul; which Doctrine might be choking to many of the Hearers, becauſe above the Comprehenſion of Reaſon, as in the Caſe of *Nicodemus*; and therefore, to check their Surpriſe, he proceeds to ſpeak of the *ſecond* and proper Reſurrection, *v.* 28, 29. *Marvel not at this; for the Hour is coming* (where he does not add *and now is*) *in which all that are in the Graves ſhall hear his Voice, and ſhall come forth: They that have done Good, to the Reſurrection of Life; and they that have done Evil, unto the Reſurrection of Damnation.* Whence 'tis evident, 1. We are to diſtinguiſh betwixt theſe *two Reſurrections*, the *one* being preſent in our *Saviour's* State of Humiliation, the *other* of *another Nature* to come after that, which can be meant of none elſe but the *proper Reſurrection*. 2. In that Paſſage is a full Enumeration of all the Dead, whether in the Senſe of the preceeding Verſe, or of this; for *Grave* muſt comprehend all of them, and ſo not only the ſurviving Part of Mankind, but theſe who are really and properly dead and buried. 3. It is to be underſtood of both *Good* and *Bad*, as here; and ſo this Text will be a ſpecial Help to us.

It is plain, the *Dead*, in the preceeding Verſe, were neither in the *Sea* or *Graves*, as theſe are expreſly ſaid to be; and therefore we are of Neceſſity to take *Dead*, in a Senſe different from that, and conſequently it is to be meant of theſe *properly* dead, *i. e.* of theſe whoſe Souls are actually ſeparated from their Bodies. It is enough to have noticed this, for the Underſtanding of the reſt of the Words, where we have to conſider, 1. Their ſeveral Repoſitories. 2. The Manner of their Reſurrection. And, 3. Their Judgment.

I. Their ſeveral *Repoſitories*, viz. *three*. Some, in general, by them underſtand only the *Elements*, which they count *four*, and make them out of this Text thus; the *Sea* is Water, *Death* the Earth, and *Hell* a Compoſition of Fire and Air: They imagine all Things are made of theſe four, and are afterwards reſolved into them; But that, at the Reſurrection, each of theſe Elements will reſtore that Part was borrowed at firſt from, and afterwards returned to them. The Foundation of this Conceit is ridicul'd by the *modern Philoſophers*, tho' I doubt not what the moſt of that learned Order have put in the Room of theſe Elements, is as far from the Truth, as the old and outdated Opinions are: Yet thus to interprete Scripture, is to make the Word of God truckle to the un-

certain Notions in *Philoſophy*; and therefore I ſhall otherwiſe conſider theſe three, and fetch their Senſe from what is more certain.

1. *The Sea.* Some, becauſe they cannot find theſe alive in this Enumeration, fix it here, and contend, The Sea ſignifies the Earth; we ſpoke of this on *Chap.* xiii. 1. But how they can make out their Scheme here this Way, I ſee not; for ſtill they fall in with what they reckoned a great Blunder in the former Verſe, that by *Dead* we ſhould underſtand the *Living*: For if it had been ſimply ſaid, The Sea gave up what was in it, without telling whether they were dead or alive, they would have more to ſay; But while it is ſaid, *The Sea gave up the Dead which were in it*, they contradict themſeves. And ſo it will reſolve in this Queſtion, Whether the Difficulty be leſs, to preſume theſe *alive*, called *dead*, v. 12. who are ſaid to appear without any Reſurrection; or to make theſe *dead* and *raiſed* again, to ſignify ſuch as never properly died? When they ſhall be able to extricate themſelves out of this Strait, they may be liſtned to, but not ſooner. I think therefore we had beſt take this in its natural Import, and ſo the Senſe of it will be eaſy; for it repreſents to us whence a great many of the Dead ſhall come, *viz.* from the Sea. I would not conclude a third Part of the World to be *drowned*, becauſe this is one of *three Branches*: Yet, to be ſure, a great many have periſhed in the *Water*, ſome one Way, and ſome another, and that for ſeveral Thouſands of Years, eſpecially ſince the Method of Sea-fighting has obtained; but even otherwiſe a great many died in the Waters, the whole World was drowned at once, except eight Perſons. As for the curious and (many of them) prophane Enquiries about theſe eaten by Fiſhes, theſe Fiſhes devoured by others, or taken and eaten by Men, *&c.* how the Sea can give up theſe? *&c.* It is ſufficient Anſwer, If theſe Dead are not in the Sea, then they are ſome where elſe; and wherever they are, they will be returned or reſtored.

2. The next Repoſitory is called *Death*. We muſt diſtinguiſh this from the *Sea* and *Hell*; yet this makes it not the more eaſy: The moſt probable Opinion is that which thereby underſtands the *Unburied*; as ſuch who are burnt, devoured by wild Beaſts, or Fowls: This has the Advantage of theſe who by Death mean all that die a natural Death, *i. e.* by the Force of a Diſeaſe, becauſe theſe may come under the third Head, which ſeems the moſt comprehenſive. Nor can I believe, tho' *Death* and *Hell* are mentioned together, that therefore they ſignify the ſame Thing; becauſe, while we read of their Surrender of what was in them, they are diſtinguiſhed when they are coupled together in the *dual* Number, which makes them to be *two*: So that here we may mean all theſe whoſe Duſt was not buried, whatever Way they died upon Earth, if they were not drowned.

3. The laſt Repoſitory is *Hell*, ᾅδης. Some take this for the Place of the Damned, and no doubt in many Places this muſt be its Senſe: But I preſume it cannot be ſo taken here, for theſe Reaſons, 1. There is no Account of *Heaven* giving up the Souls in it, tho' we are ſure the Souls of the Saints are to be united to their Bodies, as well as the Souls of the Wicked; had this been the Deſign of the *Spirit of God*, we might expect the one would be mentioned as well as the other. 2. The Souls in Hell are not dead in the ſame Senſe that theſe in the *Sea* and *Death* are, yet the Text ſpeaks plainly of the Dead in them all; which pleads they are equally dead, which will not hold on this Suppoſition. 3. *Death and Hell* are joined together, and both ſaid to give up their *ſeveral Dead*; which ſays, the ſame Sort of Dead is in the one, as in the other: But none contend that Souls are theſe in Death, therefore it cannot be meant of Souls in Hell. And both of them are to *give up* after the ſame Manner; yet it is certain, that *Hell* gives not up Souls the ſame Way that the Sea and Death gives up Bodies. 4. The Enumeration will not be full, if we underſtand this of the Place of the Damned; becauſe there are more Dead than what is in the Sea, or theſe unburied, *viz.* theſe who are honoured with Graves: And therefore it would appear, by *Hell* we ſhould underſtand the *Grave*; eſpecially that we muſt of Neceſſity take it ſo in other Places of Scripture; as, *Acts* ii. 27. *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell*, which muſt be underſtood of the Grave, and is generally ſo taken; yea, the following Clauſe requires it, which limits the Time our Lord was to be in the Grave, *Pſal.* xvi. 10. *Thou wilt not ſuffer thine holy One to ſee Corruption*; this is quoted from the *Pſalms*. We have the ſame *Hebrew* Word uſed by *Jacob*, Gen. xlii. 38. *Ye ſhall bring down my gray Hairs with Sorrow to the Grave*. *Liſcheol* is in both Texts; yet, who will ſay that the Patriarch was to go to Hell, or the Place of the Damned, or that he feared any ſuch Thing? The Word in our Text is alſo rendered *Grave*, 1 Cor. xv. 55. *O Grave, where is thy Victory?* The Force of the Word pleads this, for it comes from *α privative*, and ἰδεῖν *to ſee*; becauſe the Grave is a Place of Darkneſs and Obſcurity.

II. The Manner of the Reſurrection, *They gave up the Dead*. This is repeated, to ſhew the Certainty thereof: It has an Alluſion to a *Truſt* committed to one that muſt

muſt be *accountable*; and here they make their Reckoning. This is the commom Import of the Word, *Mat.* xvi. 19. *I give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.* Rom. xiv. 12. *Every one of us ſhall give an Account of himſelf unto God.* So that all theſe *dead Bodies* are ſo many Pieces of *Truſt* committed by God to the *Sea*, *Death*, and the *Grave*, for which they are to account. In this I further notice theſe Things,

1. The *Eaſineſs* of the Reſurrection. What is more eaſy than to give? Not as if the *Sea*, *Death*, and *Hell*, had any Power of redelivering; but God is to take up what he had laid down, to which there can be no Oppoſition or Reſiſtance. What can be too hard for Omnipotency? He will no doubt exert that Degree of Power at the *Reſurrection*, he did in the *Creation*; *He ſpoke the Word, and it was done.* At firſt he commanded all Things out of nothing; this is *inconceivable*! Here he will command the Sea, Death, and Hell, to give up all the Bodies of either Saints or Wicked, tho' turned into a thouſand Shapes, and undergone as many different Changes; which is as *incomprehenſible*, as to the Way: But as to the Thing, we may only repeat the Apoſtle's Words, *Acts* xxvi. 8. *Why ſhould it be thought a Thing incredible with you, that God ſhould raiſe the Dead?* Yea, and *eaſily* too; for, to be ſure, it is more to bring all Things out of nothing, than to bring every Thing into its natural State, from its ſhattered Elements diſperſed into never ſo many Places; As we ſee ſome can put all the Parts of a Machine together, who cannot make any the leaſt Piece of it. This may ſatisfy us as to the *Poſſibility* and *Eaſineſs* of the Thing, eſpecially if we add a few auxiliary Thoughts from Scripture, as *Enoch*'s Tranſlation, *Elijah*'s Rapture, *Aaron*'s Rod budding, *&c.* the *Iſraelites* Garments unworn, tho' uſed for Forty Years; the *Three Children* in the fiery Furnace, *Jonas* in the Whale's Belly, *&c.*

2. The *Speedineſs* of the Reſurrection. What is ſooner done, than to give up what one has lying by him? which is the Caſe here. Theſe Things are not to ſeek from afar; each of theſe Promptuaries have all at Hand that is required of them, and ſo it will be done very quickly. It is a groundleſs Opinion, That the Reſurrection will conſume as much Time as the Creation; there being no ſuch Inſinuation in Scripture. Nor is it neceſſary to compare the *Reſurrection* with the *Creation*, further than to maintain an *infinite Power* imployed in both.

3. The Reſtitution will be of the ſame *invidual* Thing depoſitate, not an *equivalent*, or like; as when we borrow Money, it is not neceſſary we repay the very ſame that we got, it is enough if it be of the ſame Value. But here it is ſaid, *They give up the Dead which were in them*, i. e. theſe very Bodies were beſtowed in theſe three Places. *Job* ſpeaks to the ſame Purpoſe, *Job* xix. 26, 27. *In my Fleſh I ſhall ſee God: Whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf, and mine Eyes ſhall behold him, and not another.* There are ſeveral Things plead this ſhould be ſo; as, 1. It would not be a Reſurrection, if that did not riſe which was buried, *&c.* It might be ſome new Production, but no proper Reſurrection. 2. Juſtice requires it ſhould be ſo, that that Body was the Tool of the Soul in Sin, ſhould be its Companion in Puniſhment; and that Body was imploy'd in the Service of God, at the Direction of the Soul, ſhould ſhare with the Soul in Glory. 3. The great Example and Pledge of our Reſurrection proves this: Chriſt did not riſe with another Body, but that in which he lived and died; the Truth of which, a doubting *Thomas* was ſatisfied of, by ſeeing and feeling, tho' he refuſed other as ſure Documents.

III. The Procedure of the Judgment, *And they were judged every Man according to his Works*: The ſame in Subſtance with what we had in the Cloſe of the laſt Verſe, where it was explain'd. There was no need to mention the Books again; and this Clauſe ſeems to be repeated, to aſſure us the Quick and the Dead will be judged after the ſame Manner.

14 And Death and Hell were caſt into the Lake of Fire: This is the ſecond Death.

15 And whoſoever was not found written in the Book of Life, was caſt into the Lake of Fire.

This is the *Execution* of the Sentence, and is denied of none, but ſuch as would have all this Paſſage, from *v.* 11. concern the *Converſion* of the *Jews*; but with how little Reaſon, we have ſeen in the Explication and Vindication of the ſeveral Parts. Others, who own this reſpects the *Execution* of the final Sentence, tell us, In theſe two Verſes we have the *Sentence* of *Condemnation*; and, in the following two Chapters, the *Sentence* of *Abſolution* in favours of the Elect. They ſay, All the Wicked will be ſent a

packing to Hell at firſt; and, after that, will follow the Reward of the Righteous, in the next two Chapters. I offer a few Conſiderations in Anſwer to this;

1. I ſee not how this will follow from the Conſideration of theſe two Verſes, and much leſs from the next two Chapters; for we read, *Chap.* xxii. 15. *Without are Dogs, and Sorcerers, and Whoremongers, and Murderers,* &c. They muſt apply this to the State of the Damned, becauſe they are *without*, i. e. out of Heaven, and conſequently they muſt be in Hell. Yet this is to preceed the Day of Judgment; for it is ſaid, *v.* 12. *Behold, I come quickly, and my Reward is with me*: Where they muſt either think of a Coming after the Day of Judgment, which I am ſure they have no Ground for; or allow *v.* 11. and 15. of *Chap.* xxii. to reſpect the *Separation* of all theſe Sorts of Perſons from the Kingdom of Chriſt upon Earth, before the Day of Judgment; and conſequently theſe two Chapters following have no Concern with the *State of Glory* in Heaven, as a great many contend.

2. In the other Accounts from Scripture of the laſt Judgment, we find ſtill the Abſolution of the Godly to take Place in the Order of Time before the Condemnation of the Wicked; And it is not to be ſuppoſed the Apoſtle would invert this Order without Neceſſity, which is not pled here. We have one notable Paſſage from our Lord to this Purpoſe, *Matth.* xxv. 33. where, after he ranges the *Sheep* and the *Goats*, the *firſt* being ſet on his *Right-hand*, and the *other* on his *Left*, v. 34. he addreſſed himſelf *firſt* to the *Sheep*: And, that we may not miſtake it, the *Evangeliſt* prefixes the Adverb of Time, τότε; *Then the King ſhall ſay to them on his Right-hand, Come, ye Bleſſed,* &c. *i. e.* after he had ſo placed them, the firſt Words were to his own: And after they are abſolved, it is ſaid, *v.* 41. *And then ſhall he ſay to them on the Left-hand, Depart from me, ye Curſed,* &c. Whence it is plain, he firſt *judgeth* by *Abſolution* his *Elect*, and then afterwards *judgeth* by *Condemnation* the *Wicked*. This is ſuch a glaring Evidence, as cannot be refuſed. Beſides, Reaſon ſeems to plead this: For it will be no ſmall Aggravation of the Miſery of the Reprobate, that they ſhall have the Mortification to ſee theſe they had hated, injured and perſecuted, received into God's everlaſting Favour, and themſelves ſhut out.

They object, The Apoſtle *Paul* mentions the *Condemnation* of the Wicked before the *Abſolution* of the Elect, 2 *Theſſ.* i. and hence conclude, we cannot determine any Thing from the *Order* of Scripture-narrative. I anſwer, This is a manifeſt Miſtake: For tho' I own we are not always to adhere to the Order of the *Narrative* to determine the Order of *Succeſſion*, eſpecially when we find the ſame Events ſometimes enumerate in *one Order*, and ſometimes in *another*; yet, when the ſame Things are ſo pointedly accounted for in the ſame Order, then we may reaſonably conclude that to be the Order of *Nature* and *Time*. Nor indeed does any Thing in the objected Context croſs this, for the Apoſtle begins with the Elect, and makes their *Patience* an Evidence of their *Salvation*, v. 5. *Which is a manifeſt Token of the righteous Judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God*, i. e. of the Kingdom of Glory: This certainly points at their Abſolution. Afterwards indeed, by Turns, he ſpeaks of the Fate of both the Reprobate and Elect, but it is plain he begins with the Godly. Theſe two Paſſages being the moſt pat to the Purpoſe, we may allow them to ſtand Evidences for what is alledged. Nor do I find theſe Authors at much Pains to juſtify this Thought of the Order at the Day of Judgment; yea, they own the *Godly* will be firſt abſolved, but that this is not to be proven from the Order of the Scripture-narrative. This is a plain Fetch, to make Way for the intended Meaning of the next two Chapters, that they immediately relate to the Kingdom of Glory.

Others, by *v.* 14. underſtand the *Condemnation* of the *Devils*, and ſo ſtill they make both theſe Verſes condemnatory: Their Reaſon is, Becauſe the *Devil* is ſaid to be *he that hath the Power of Death*; and ſo they make it a *Metonomy* of the *Subject*. But they have not fortified this Thought; and are at a Loſs when they come to the next Word, *Hell*, for they underſtand it of the Place of the Damned, *v.* 13. and ſo the Senſe of it here muſt be, *Hell was caſt into Hell*. But we are under no Neceſſity thus to ſqueeze Texts, or force a Meaning from them which the Context will not allow; for we read of the Judgment of *Satan*, and conſequently of his *Angels*, v. 10. of this Chapter, when they were pent up in their eternal Caverns: Nor have we Reaſon to believe they will be let out again to receive a *ſecond* Sentence. So that in all Probability this has no Reſpect to *Devils*, but is to be the Trial of the *Dead*, among which we can in no tolerable Reaſon liſt *Devils*; elſe we muſt put more in the *Concluſion* than was in the *Premiſſes*; as will appear to any who ſhall conſider, only Mankind are ranged in the two former Verſes, and ſo in this Execution we will not find Devils; for, ſeeing they were not among the Pannels, they can have no Share of the Doom, further than as the Increaſe of the Number of the Damned, will heighten the Sorrows of the

the whole Community; becauſe theſe Tempters will then have their Ears lanced by the pitiful Howlings, and heavy Curſes of ſuch wretched Mortals they had drawn off to the Commiſſion of thoſe Sins will then be made the Ground of Sentence againſt them.

I then take theſe two Verſes to contain the whole Execution of the laſt Judgment; of *Abſolution*, v. 14. and *Condemnation*, v. 15.

1. The *Abſolution* of the Elect, or their *eternal Redemption* from all the Effects and Conſequents of Sin, *v.* 14. Where we have to conſider, 1. The Subjects ſpoken of, the Enemies of the Godly. 2. Their Doom. 3. The Explication thereof.

1. The Subjects, *Death and Hell.* I ſee not how we can take them in any other Senſe than what we had, *v.* 13. elſe we ſhould run ourſelves into the greateſt Difficulties, if a new Senſe muſt be put upon Words as oft as they occur: Or if we will enlarge the Signification, we cannot carry it further than by *Death* to underſtand all Sorts of Death, whether natural or violent; and, by *Hell*, the Grave: Or, if we make it wider, to mean all the Repoſitories of the dead Elect. Thus we will have a very eaſy and natural Senſe; for as they were abſolved from their Sins in Judgment, which is an open Declaration of their *Juſtification* through Chriſt, by which they are put out of the Reach of the *Wrath of God*; now they are to be freed from all the Effects of Sin, which are, 1. The Separation of the Soul from the Body, called *Death* in the moſt proper Senſe. 2. The Putriſaction of the Body when ſeparate: This is called the *Grave*; which, next to Heaven, is to be ſure the greateſt Mercy God's People can meet with, for hereby they are ſecured in the eternal Poſſeſſion of theſe Bleſſings they will then be honoured with.

Object. The Abolition of *Death* is what will fall to the Share of the *Wicked*, as well as the *Godly*; the *Reprobate* will be as incapable of *Death* as the *Elect*. Anſwer, 1. This is no *Mercy* to the Wicked, that they cannot die, as it is to the Godly. 2. This Immortality of theirs is couched up in the next Part of the Execution, tho' not expreſly mentioned as here, yet imply'd: Becauſe, next to the Torments of Hell, their Life will be their greateſt *Miſery*; but here it is a notable *Privilege* to Believers.

That here a *Perſonality* is aſcribed to *Death* and *Hell*, is no more than what we find common to many other Things, as void of Life and Senſe as either of them, by Authors both Humane and Sacred: But that which makes for our Purpoſe here, is, by that Figure *Proſopopoeia*, we find a perſonal Action aſcribed to *them* in the preceeding Verſe, *to give up*: And yet more plainly by the Apoſtle *Paul*, who calls *Death an Enemy*, 1 Cor. xv. 26. and *the laſt Enemy*: And addreſſeth himſelf to both *Death* and the *Grave*, as if they were Perſons, *v.* 55. *O Death, where is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory?*

2. Their Doom, *Were caſt into the Lake of Fire.* This is to be meant of utter Deſtruction, and the former Figure muſt come in here: For theſe Things that want a *poſitive Being*, are not capable of a *poſitive Miſery*; but it is to be meant of ſuch a Deſtruction as they are capable of: This, in the Propriety of Speech, may be called *Abolition*; the Senſe of that Text above-quoted, *The laſt Enemy that is to be deſtroyed is Death.* I take this to comprehend the *Grave* that follows *Death*; for he ſpeaks afterwards more fully of them both, as Enemies to the Saints. That here it is ſaid, *they were caſt into the Lake*, is to ſhew they are ſo to be aboliſhed, that they ſhall never recover their wonted Power and Influence; as we ſee, when Satan was caſt into the Lake, *v.* 10. it is added, he was to continue there for ever and for ever.

From this, ſome conclude, that at this Time will be made the greateſt Change upon the Children of God, *when Mortality ſhall be ſwallowed up of Life*; and that this Transformation will happen at the ſame Time to theſe *alive*, and theſe *raiſed again*; which they confirm from theſe Words, 1 *Cor.* xv. 54. *So when this Corruptible ſhall put on Incorruption, and this Mortal ſhall have put on Immortality, then ſhall be brought to paſs the Saying that is written, Death is ſwallowed up in Victory.* But whether this immortalizing Vertue will be communicate in the very Act of Reſurrection, or if it will be delayed till after the Judgment, I have no Will to be poſitive, ſeeing both Sides of the Queſtion want not Probability; And we can expect no more as to the Order of theſe Things, ſeeing God has been ſparing in the Revelation, and gives us little more than Hints.

There are ſome other curious Thoughts about this *Lake of Fire*; as, ſome tell us, It will take in that *univerſal Conflagration* will happen at the Conſummation of all Things; and the rather they are of the Mind, that in all this *Cataſtrophe* of the World we have no mention of it, unleſs it be here; and it is not to be preſumed that the *Holy Ghoſt* would omit ſuch a remarkable Thing. This Reaſon is very weak, for it may be paſt over in Silence here, becauſe the Apoſtle *Peter* is ſo full about it, 2 *Pet.* iii. 6, &c. Others skrew this higher, and ſay, This *Fire* will be the *Mean* of God's Appointment for refining the Elect

and will purge from them that Mortality and Corruption they contracted by Sin, and were under the Power of, in the Grave; and so, in a most proper Sense, it may be said, these two, *Death* and the *Grave*, will be cast into the Lake of Fire. This, they pretend, was prefigured in *Elijah*, who was caught up to Heaven in a *Chariot of Fire*, 2 Kings ii. 11. which seasoned him by the Way, and fitted his Body for the Possession of Glory; and this they take to be the Scope of that obscure Passage, 1 *Cor.* iii. 12, &c. of *every Man's Work being tried by Fire*. These Thoughts are the mere Spawn of forward Minds, and without any solid Foundation in the Word of God: Nay, we are sure from the next Verse, it is designed for the Wicked; yea, and that this *Lake of Fire* is before the universal Conflagration, for *Satan* was cast into it, and the *Beast* and *False Prophet* were there a *thousand Years* before: And will be yet clearer from,

3. The Explication of this Doom, *Which is the second Death*. We heard of two Resurrections, *one* designed the *first*, v. 5. the *other* is mentioned *v.* 13. but not called the *second*; nor was it needful, for the *first* says there is *another* to follow, and when we meet with it, to be sure it is the *second*. Just so, this Lake of Fire is called *the second Death*, which says there is another before, that may be designed the *first* Death; And as the *first* Resurrection was less compleat than the *second*, so the *second Death* will be a greater Misery than the *first*. Finally, as the *second Resurrection* put the Sharers thereof in an unalterable State of Bliss, if they belong to Christ; so this *second Death* binds down all that have their Portion therein, to an endless and remediless Misery; and so it is said to last for ever and for ever.

II. The Execution of this last Judgment of Condemnation, *v.* 15. Where we have, 1. The Persons. 2. Their Punishment.

1. The Persons, *Whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life*. This is to be taken in Opposition to the *Elect*, whose Names are found written in that Book. As for the Expression, *Not found written*, it bears Respect to the Opening of the Book of Life, *v.* 12. for the World could not know who were *written* there, and who *not*, till the Book was opened. The Holy Company of the Saints being separate from the rest, and freed from all Things Sin had exposed them to, were received by their great Lord, and stood *Witnesses* and *Assessors* in the rest of that Day's Solemnity: Now all the rest of the Posterity of *Adam* stand by themselves, having received Sentence, wait trembling the Execution thereof, which follows. The Folly of that Opinion hugged by *Grotius*, and after him by *Hamond*, *viz.* That some Names might be written in that Book, and afterwards blotted out, we exposed and considered, *Chap.* iii. 5. *Chap.* xiii. 8. for this signifies neither less nor more than the whole reprobate World, whose Names were never written in the Book of Life.

2. Their Punishment, *Was cast into the Lake of Fire*. Of this we heard before, on *Chap.* ii. 11. *Chap.* xix. 20. and in the 6. and 10. Verses of this Chapter. In some of these Places, I shewed, it represented the miserable State of impure Spirits, and separate Souls, under the Wrath of God; for Devils have no Bodies, and the Souls of the Wicked were separate from theirs: But here we must extend this to comprehend what will be tormenting of Bodies as well as of Spirits; And the Bodies of the Wicked, after the Resurrection, will be rendered *immortal*, on purpose to be *sensible* of the scorching of this fiery Lake; so that they will be compleatly miserable.

CHAP. XXI.

ON the second Part of *Chap.* xx. from *v.* 4. I shewed we are to expect a beautiful and glorious State of the Church upon Earth, which we have more fully discovered in this and the Beginning of the next Chapter. This is agreeable to the Method of this Prophecy, wherein we find the most momentuous Events *first* touched at, and *afterwards* inlarged and amplified, as we found in the *Seals* and *Vials*. That the 20th Chapter did entertain us with a new Vision, we endeavoured to prove, which of Course is to be further illustrate here.

If it be objected, We have only (even according to this Supposition) the Enlargement of *one* Part of *five*, which is not of a Piece with the two former Instances, where all the Parts of the Vision are reconsidered; whereas here, *four* of them are intirely neglected: I answer, The *first* Part of that Vision, *Chap.* xx. is so plainly accounted for in the first three Verses, there was no need to come over it again, especially that the *second* Part is a Confirmation thereof; and so this Illustration may be reckoned to amplify both. The *third* Part of the Vision, *viz.* the *Loosing of Satan*, &c. is a very melan-

melancholly Viſion, but of ſhort Continuance, and therefore needed not to be inſiſted on. The *fourth* Part of that Chapter repreſents the Miſery of *Satan*, and his two Accomplices in Wickedneſs, *Gog* and *Magog*, will be yet ſhorter in the Period of its Accompliſhment; and, being the immediate Precurſor of the laſt and general Judgment, it was not neceſſary to dwell thereon. The *fifth* and laſt Part of that Chapter entertains us with a ſhort, but comprehenſive, View of the *laſt Judgment*, ſufficiently eſtabliſhed and illuſtrate in other Parts of holy Writ; but the *ſecond* Part of the 20th Chapter, being what moſt concerns the Church, the Spirit of God is pleaſed to turn it over again by other Emblems, to *v.* 6. of Chapter xxii.

Many *Expoſitors*, whoſe Names are famous (and juſtly) in the Churches, make this Portion of the *Prophecy* to point out the State of the *Triumphant Church* above, and be a *Deſcription of Heaven* in *prophetick* Terms. I own the Expreſſions are ſuch, as could never agree to to any Period of the Church upon Earth hitherto; and therefore this cuts off the Pleadings of *Grotius*, *Hamond*, &c. who apply this to the State of the Chriſtian Church after *Conſtantine*'s Time. But having conſidered this before, I dwell no longer on it now: And therefore of Courſe this muſt either reſpect *Heaven*, or the *moſt exalted Condition of the Church upon Earth*, after the *Fall* of *Antichriſt*, and the *Binding* of *Satan*.

I grant, many of theſe Expreſſions may well be applied to the State of the Church above; yet not more appoſitely than theſe Expreſſions that exhibite the Fall of *Babylon* may be transferred to the laſt and general Judgment. Now, having proven that theſe *Terms*, however *extraordinary*, cannot, without the greateſt Violence to the Threed of the Prophecy, be applied to *Doomſday*; I think, we may alſo affirm, that this Part of the Prophecy may not concern Heaven, tho' it ſeem to look more that Way, than to any ſublunary Condition of the Church, and that upon the ſame Reaſon of Similitude: The Ground of which is this, That State of the Church will look as like *Heaven*, as it is poſſible for any *temporal State* to do; juſt as the Plague of *Babylon* will very much reſemble the *laſt Judgment* of the Wicked. That I may do Juſtice to theſe learned Authors, I ſhall firſt conſider the Grounds of their Pleadings, and then offer ſomething to juſtify the Thoughts of others that diſſent from them: And, in both, I ſhall wave theſe Reaſons taken from the Text, till we come to conſider them in their proper Order; becauſe I ſee not how any Argument can be convincingly brought for either Side from a controverted Text, as the Whole of this Paſſage is.

We are in the firſt Place to conſider the Pleadings of theſe *Learned Men*, who would have this Part of the Prophecy a Deſcription of Heaven, and ſhall only notice theſe two, which are their ſtrongeſt Arguments:

1. This Senſe appears plainly to be the direct Continuation of the Threed of the Prophecy; for what we had before, deſcribes the wreſtling State of the Church while her Adverſaries were great, and then her Victory over them; ſo that nothing could remain after this, but the glorified State of the Church. This Reaſon has gone a great Way with many, and therefore we would anſwer it the more diſtinctly in theſe Conſiderations;

(1.) This Argument plainly ſuppoſes this *Prophecy* to contain the Hiſtory of the Church, both on *Earth* and in *Heaven*, which yet theſe learned Men are at no Pains to prove, but from the Context, which is not good, it being the Matter in Queſtion; whereas, with more Reaſon, we are to believe the Whole of the *Prophecy* concerns the *temporal State* of the Church: Nor have we any Account of *Heaven*, but in ſhort and ſcattered Expreſſions, which is not to be thought for this Reaſon, becauſe that exalted Condition of the Elect is not worth the conſidering, but plainly becauſe it is truly inexplicable, as the Apoſtle ſays of it, when he was caught up thereunto, 2 *Cor.* xii. 4. *He heard unſpeakable Words, which it is not lawful for a Man to utter.* Beſides, if we may, as it is owned we muſt, underſtand by that Expreſſion, *Rev.* i. 1. *Things which muſt ſhortly come to paſs*, the general Subject of this Prophecy, and that all theſe Things were to fall out in Time, I ſee not how we can ſafely flee to Heaven therewith; for Heaven was none of theſe Futurities, ſeeing it exiſted ſome Thouſands of Years before this Prophecy, and Believers are carried thither.

(2.) This Argument ſuppoſes, that all the Parts of this Prophecy run in one continued and uninterrupted Chain, which we have found to be falſe; yea, the Abettors of this Opinion own, that the Prophecy returns upon ſome Points but lightly touched at before, elſe it will not be poſſible to make Senſe of it: And, why may not the ſame Allowance be granted here?

(3.) Theſe ſame Authors make the *ſixth Seal*, Chap. vi. 12. to be a Prophecy of the Day of Judgment, and *Chap.* vii. a Deſcription of the glorified State of the Saints: Now, how can they juſtify an uninterrupted Threed of the Prophecy, while they meet

with the laſt Judgment and Heaven ſo early, and yet own, as they muſt, a great many after-named Events to fall out before the End? This certainly deſtroys the Force of their Reaſon, taken from a continued Courſe of the *Series* of Affairs relating to the Church, ſeeing they break it themſelves.

2. Argument is taken from the Cloſe of *Chap.* xx. where, they ſay, we have the Execution of the Judgment of God at the End of the World upon the Wicked; and, it is reaſonable we believe that this Part of the Prophecy contains the Sentence of Abſolution in Favours of the Elect. Some think this the moſt plauſible Reaſon: But then, if the two laſt Verſes of *Chap.* xx. contain the full Execution of the laſt Judgment, whether of *Condemnation* or *Abſolution*, as I endeavoured to prove, this muſt fall to the Ground. Nor, after all the Thought I am capable of, can I find, but *v.* 14. of *Chap.* xx. muſt be a Sentence of Abſolution, becauſe thereby the Elect are freed from their laſt Enemies.

I would next offer ſomething to ſupport the other Opinion, That this Part of the Prophecy is not to be meant of the glorified State of the Church in Heaven, but that immediately and directly it belongs to the glorious State of the Church upon Earth, after the Binding of Satan. The Reaſons are,

(1.) From the general Scope of this Prophecy, which concerns the various Revolutions of the Church on this Side of Eternity; for it contains only an Account of what was to come to paſs after the Viſions, and ſo all of them were to fall out in Time. If we abandon this, we will be at the greateſt Loſs how to find the Meaning of the ſeveral Paſſages; But, this being ſufficiently eſtabliſhed, it will be the more eaſy to attain the Senſe of its Parts. Nay, I might venture to ſay, if the Spirit of God had deſigned a Deſcription of Heaven, we would have had it in other Terms, if it be poſſible to make theſe Things, *which Eye hath not ſeen, or Ear heard, or what can enter into the Mind of Man to conceive*, ſuit to our ſhallow Underſtandings. It is alſo very plain, tho' this be the Account of the moſt perfect State of the Church of Chriſt upon Earth, yet will it not be without ſome Mixture, and therefore it is compared to a City fenced, and to a Camp with Entrenchments, *Chap.* xx. 9.

(2.) 'Tis moſt agreeable to the Method of this Prophecy, firſt to give a Hint of notable Events, and then return upon them by a larger Explication. Now, no Event can be more notable than that of the *Millennium*, of which we had but ſhort and ſlender Accounts before, and therefore it might well be expected the Holy Spirit would turn it over again: Nor can we apply this Paſſage to any of the five Particulars in the 20th Chapter, but the ſecond, as we have ſeen above; ſo that this Context muſt concern it.

(3.) The Throng of this Paſſage is quoted from the Prophecies of *Iſaiah*, Chapters lxv. and lxvi. To ſay there is only an Alluſion, appears very hard; when the Terms are the ſame, and while both Prophets ſpeak the ſame Words, I ſee no Reaſon why we may not allow them to be the ſame Thing: Yet all agree, that *Iſaiah* had not the remoteſt View of the *triumphant Church*, nor indeed will the Words bear it, but plainly point at the proſperous Condition of Chriſt's Church upon Earth; and ſo, I think, in all Reaſon it ſhould be taken here. I acknowledge, a late Author, conſidering the Harmony betwixt the Prophet and Apoſtle, ſays, *He doubts much if the true Senſe of the Prophet* Iſaiah *in theſe two Chapters be yet known*: But all the While, he will not aſſert plainly that it has an Eye to Heaven; or if he had, which indeed he inſinuates, the bare Reading of the Context is ſufficient for Confutation. The particular Explication of the Parts of this Paſſage, will give more Light in this Matter, which we haſten to.

This Viſion imploys 32 Verſes, which we may take up in two general Branches; 1. A general and preparatory Account of the laſt and moſt auguſt State of the Church of God upon Earth, by very ſurpriſing Emblems, that the Prophet might be the better diſpoſed to conſider the Particulars were afterwards to be repreſented to him. It may be alſo, according to ſome, theſe Viſions were at a greater Diſtance from him, than what afterwards he ſaw, when he was carried to the Top of a high Mountain: But, whether the Emblems were the ſame that he ſaw here, and afterwards, will be hard to determine, if we conſider the Words cloſly. However, this general View he deſcribes in the firſt eight Verſes of the Chapter. 2. A particular Account thereof, if not by a new Emblem, yet to be ſure by ſeveral new Diſcoveries thereof, which he particularly mentions. The Spirit of God is pleaſed to reveal this by Parcels, on Purpoſe that we may give the more Attention, and have the more diſtinct Views of the Things repreſented; for thereby the Impreſſion is made the deeper: This reaches from *v.* 9. of this Chapter, to *v.* 6. of the following.

In the general Account we have two Viſions, one *v.* 1. the other, *v.* 2. and as many Voices, the firſt *v.* 3, 4. the next in the following four. It muſt be owned, that the Underſtanding of the ſpecial Manifeſtation, after-narrated, depends upon the Knowledge

of

of this firſt and more obſcure, as well as more general Part; and therefore we are to be the more obſerving.

1 AND I ſaw a new Heaven, and a new Earth; for the firſt Heaven, and the firſt Earth were paſſed away; and there was no more Sea.

Here we have the Viſion, and Reaſon why he calls the *Heaven* and *Earth new*. A great many incline to take this literally, and ſo have very eaſy Work, till they come to the Application thereof, and the particular Account from *v.* 9. then they are fain to quit that Notion, tho' they contend hard for it here. To be ſure, they muſt grant this is a *Viſion*, and the Thing ſeen an *Emblem*, which muſt ſtill differ from the *Truth*. It cannot be refuſed but that, wherever the *Prophets* had Viſions, theſe Emblems were not diſcovered the ſame Way they were to exiſt, tho' there be always ſuch an *Analogy* betwixt them, that from the *Type*, the Church was helped to find out the *Truth* thereby ſignified. But we proceed to conſider the Parts of this.

1. What the Prophet ſaw, *a new Heaven and a new Earth*. This, ſome tell us, is after the univerſal Conflagration they would have to be mentioned in the Cloſe of the preceeding Chapter; and that, *Phœnix*-like, it is raiſed out of its Aſhes, only with the Loſs of the Sea, which they think will be conſumed with Fire. This is thought by ſome to be the ſafeſt Way of inveſtigating this Part of the Prophecy; I am ſure it is by far the eaſieſt: But then it is very hard to ſwallow their Pill of Explication; for they turn the Earth into a Heaven after the Day of Judgment; and they muſt allow Chriſt to be perſonally preſent with his Church, *i. e.* he muſt then quit his heavenly *Manſions*, and leave the excellent Glory of the everlaſting Father, to be enjoyed only by the holy Angels in Heaven; for he is to bring thence all the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect. I do not ſay they advance all theſe Things, but it is too evident they flow very naturally from their Senſe; and they plainly croſs the plaineſt Truths in the Goſpel, particularly *John* xiv. where Chriſt's comfortable Sermon to his Diſciples runs quite in another Strain: He there promiſes indeed *to come again*; but he does not ſay, *He will ſtay with them on Earth*, but that *He will take them with him to Heaven*, to theſe *Manſions prepared there for them*. Others again will have this *Earth* turned into *Hell*: Theſe Thoughts are very different; but the ſureſt Way to attain the Senſe of this Emblem, is to bring it from other Scriptures; for theſe Words are not *ſtrange* to the *Prophets*.

1. The firſt Place I name is of the Prophet *Iſaiah*, to which all own our Apoſtle is here alluding, *Iſa.* lxv. 17. *Behold, I create new Heavens and a new Earth, and the former ſhall not be remembred, nor come into Mind*; which he comes over again in the next *Chapter* lxvi. 22. *As the new Heavens and the new Earth which I will make ſhall remain before me*. Now, as far as I can learn, none ever thought the Prophet was ſpeaking of the *Erection* of a *new* material Heaven and Earth: Nay, it is evident from the preceeding Part of *Chap.* lxv. he is ſpeaking of the *Calling* of the *Gentiles*; and ſo the whole Senſe of that Paſſage muſt be the *Abolition* of the *Jewiſh* Yoke of *Ceremonies*, and the Propagation of the *Goſpel-Church*, which was to conſiſt of both *Jews* and *Gentiles*. This indeed had a partial Accompliſhment long ſince, but will not be fulfilled in its utmoſt Comprehenſion, till that *Period* of the Church come we are hinting at. That we cannot otherwiſe underſtand the Prophet *Iſaiah*, is plain; for he neither talks of *Judgment* or the *Reſurrection*.

2. The next Place is that of the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* cii. 26. *They* [the Heaven and Earth] *ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt endure; yea, all of them ſhall wax old as a Garment; as a Veſture ſhalt thou change them, and they ſhall be changed*. Where it is plain the *Pſalmiſt* is running the Parallel betwixt the *Eternity* of God, and the *Duration* of the moſt permanent Pieces of the *Creation*; which will not prove any Thing, either on the one Side or the other. Beſides, tho' many ſpeak of *Annihilation* on this Text; yet others of as much Judgment think the Expreſſions are not juſt, but ſhould be thought rather to point at the Change of the Uſe of them, and collate this Text with the foreciteed from *Iſaiah*. However, it is evident that this Text does not ſpeak of a *new Heaven*, and *a new Earth*, after burning of the old, *v.* 28. which is the Thing chiefly in Debate here: Yea, the next Verſe of this *Pſalm* pleads only for ſuch an Alteration as we contend for; *The Children of thy Servants ſhall continue, and their Seed ſhall be eſtabliſhed before thee*.

3. Another Paſſage (they contend ſhould clear the other two, and all the reſt that look that Way) is that of the Apoſtle *Peter*, 2 Pet. iii. 10, *&c.* where, after he has accounted for the *Diſſolution* of the World by *Fire*, he adds theſe memorable Words, *v.*

13. *Nevertheleſs we, according to his Promiſe, look for new Heavens and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteouſneſs.* They tell us, This Text is to explain all the reſt, becauſe both lateſt and cleareſt; and from it they conclude, this *Renovation* is to be after the general Judgment, and the Diſſolution of the World. Yet it is very plain theſe Words are *reſpective*, and look to a prior Promiſe, and from that Promiſe we are to fetch the Senſe; for the Apoſtle would not have more to be in his *Concluſion*, than what is fairly in the *Promiſes*, viz. the Promiſe. Theſe who tell us, This was a Promiſe made by *our Lord* in his State of Humiliation, and not recorded in Scripture, do indeed hide themſelves, and put it out of our Power to find them; and therefore, if we anſwer, they ſpeak *without Book*, I ſee not what they can reply. But others with more Candour own the *Promiſe* is nothing more or leſs than what we heard before from the Prophet *Iſaiah*; Nor can it have another Senſe in the *Quotation*, than the Deſign of the Spirit of God in its firſt *Revelation*: And there it is not ſaid to ſucceed the Conflagration of the World; Nay, nor does the Apoſtle *Peter* ſay it is to be after the *Diſſolution* of the World. It is true, it is advanced after that; but he does not ſay it is to follow it: For, even by the natural Force of the Words, it may preceed the *Day of Judgment* and the Conflagration of the World; and ſo the Senſe of it be, *Though the World will certainly be conſumed with Flames, yet before that notable Day of the Lord we look for new Heavens and a new Earth*: And ſo it is a notable Comfort to the People of God, aſſuring them *Chriſt's Kingdom will be very great before the End of the World.* This ſeems to be the moſt eaſy and natural Senſe of the Words: Beſides, we are ſure the Earth is not to be the Place of the Saints Reſt to all Eternity, but Heaven; as we read, 1 *Cor.* v. 1. *We know that if our earthly Houſe of this Tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a Building of God, an Houſe not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.*

From the whole, I conclude we are not to take this in any other Senſe than what was given above, *Chap* xx. of the Thouſand Years Reign of the Saints with Chriſt on Earth. That there will be no *Annihilation* of the viſible Creation, or any Part thereof, is generally owned; and conſequently, I am ready to think there will be no *new Creation*, for the Subſtance will be the ſame: Yet *much*, if not moſt, of the *Curſe* will be removed, and the Earth reſtored almoſt to its primitive State of *Fertility* all that Time. Even theſe who contend for the literal Senſe of this Place, and ſet it after the Day of Judgment, own this; and further, grant that the Saints will go to Heaven: But then they are at a Loſs what Uſe to put their *new Earth* to, wherein Righteouſneſs ſhall dwell; In this Meaning, we ſee plainly the great Uſe of it, to entertain the Saints in their moſt flouriſhing Condition for the Space of a Thouſand Years.

II. The Reaſons why he called the Heavens and the Earth *new*.

1. *For the Heaven and the Earth were paſſed away.* This ſeems to have no great Difficulty after what was ſaid on the firſt Part of the Verſe: For all that can be made of it is, The *old World* as inhabited by *Antichriſt*, will loſe its Faſhion, and there will be a new Scene of Affairs; for the Influence of the Heavens will be more favourable, and the Earth more fruitful: So that what ſucceeds will appear to be new, when compar'd to what is paſt. I do not think, we are to mean by this *paſſing away*, a real and elementary paſſing away of the Subſtance of *Heaven* and the *Earth*; for the contrary is plainly imply'd in the Words, *Orig. They went off*; which will not conclude that they ceaſed to *be*, but that the *Faſhion* and *Shew* of them paſſed away: But to be ſure the Change will be very notable.

2. *There was no more Sea.* Theſe who take it literally, tell us, The Conflagration will abſorp the Waters, ſo that all the *terrraqueous Globe* will be one intire *Continent* of ſolid Earth, without any Sea. If we ſhould allow this to fall out by theſe laſt Flames, I ſee not what it can make for their Purpoſe; for all that the Fire can do, is to evaporate the Sea, and then it muſt hang over the Earth in heavy and threatning Clouds, and put the Earth in Hazard of a *ſecond Deluge*, or diſcharge themſelves in Rains or Water-ſpouts, and ſo fall back into their old Chanel. If they ſhould (as I find a few do) contend for *Annihilation*, I ſhall leave them to the *Philoſophers*, who will prove upon them its *Abſurdity*.

But then, if we take this Change to preceed the *Day of Judgment*, it may be asked, What is the Meaning of this Expreſſion, *There was no more Sea*? Some think, we are to underſtand this Phraſe, the ſame in Senſe, and not much different in Sound from *paſſing away*; And the Meaning is, The *Heaven* and the *Earth* paſſed away as to their former Appearance, yet remained with Advantage to theſe that inhabit the ſame, whoſe State will be better than formerly, that the ſame is to be ſaid for the *Sea*. However, we are ſure there is this remarkable Difference, it is ſaid; *He ſaw* the *new Heavens* and the *new Earth*: But it is not ſaid, *He ſaw* a *new Sea*. To remedy this, others have found

found out a Knack from ſome Copies, *I ſaw no more Sea*; which ſays not that there was not any Sea, but only that the Apoſtle did not ſee it, or according to others, *did not notice it*. This is a Freedom with the Text we ſhould be tender of, and not indulge without better Reaſons than any adduced here.

No doubt the Sea is to be taken for one of the integral Parts of the World, which obtained, and had its Room before Sin had defiled the Handy-work of God; and when there is a Promiſe that all Things ſhould become *new*, why the *Sea* ſhould not only be deprived of this new Mould, but alſo thruſt out of the Roll of *Being*, I cannot underſtand: And by the ſame Reaſon, there will be no *Rivers*, nay, nor *Springs*; which we cannot, according to the eſtabliſhed Laws of Nature, comprehend without a *Sea*, and then it is evident the whole habitable Earth muſt be turned into a Land of Drought, yea, and become a barren Wilderneſs: From all which, I think we are to leave the literal Meaning.

Others finally by the *Sea* underſtand *Tumults*, *Confuſions*, and all Manner of *Diſorders*: And ſo, while it is ſaid, *There was no more Sea*, they mean all will be in profound Peace. Theſe ſame Perſons underſtand by the Heaven, the Church; and by the Earth, the unregenerate Part of Mankind: So that all the Children of Men will either give, or feign Obedience to Jeſus, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

As for theſe Senſes impoſed upon the *Heaven* and the *Earth*, we have found them juſtified in the Courſe of this Prophecy; tho' I cannot ſay ſo much for their Senſe of the Sea: And therefore I crave Leave to introduce an auxiliary Thought from Scripture upon that Point, that is, That by the Sea we underſtand *Gentiliſm* or *Heatheniſm*. I am not further to dwell thereon, than to offer a Scripture-Voucher from the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. lx. 5. *Then ſhalt thou ſee and flow together, and thine Heart ſhall fear, and be enlarged, becauſe the Abundance of the Sea ſhall be converted unto thee*; which we have in plain Language, *The Forces of the* Gentiles *ſhall come unto thee*. The Senſe then is, there will be no more Paganiſm: If this is not to be allowed for the Interpretation of this obſcure Clauſe, I refer it to others of more Penetration.

2 And I John ſaw the holy City, new Jeruſalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband.

This is the other *Viſion*. Here it may be enquired, Whether this *ſecond* Emblem ſignifies the ſame Thing with the *firſt*; and ſo the *new Heaven*, the *new Earth*, and the *new Jeruſalem* be the ſame? Theſe who underſtand them of a State of *Glory*, are obliged to make them one in Signification; or, as they own themſelves, to differ very little from one another: Nor indeed can they do otherwiſe, unleſs they run themſelves into great Difficulties, alledging in Heaven, or a State of Glory, that there is a particular *Metropolis*; but this is not ſaid.

Theſe who think *v.* 1. points at the *Reduction* of the *Jews*, make this *new Jeruſalem* to be the *Gentile Church*: But, at this Rate, they make the *Jewiſh Church* as much larger than the *Gentile*, as the *Heaven* and *Earth* are larger than a *great City*; which I hope, on ſecond Thoughts, they will correct: And the rather that we find in this Prophecy, when the *Jewiſh Church* is mentioned, they are numbred, at leaſt as to their Firſt-fruits; But when the Gentile Church is advanced, we read ſtill of a Numberleſs Number, as, *Chap.* vii. 9. *Chap.* xiv. 2. From whence I think it plain, the *Converts* among the *Gentiles* will in Number exceed theſe of the *Jews*.

Others tell us, This is to be meant of a very charming State of the *Chriſtian* Church, which was to outdo the *Jewiſh* in all her Worldly Fineries, to be all *Pomp* and *Show*; which they imagine did fall out after the Converſion of *Conſtantine*, of which this is the Prophecy. It would appear the Rehearſal of this Notion is Confutation enough; for, had this outward Beauty ever been the Ornament of the true Church, Chriſt had foretold it in his Life, eſpecially that it was to be within Three hundred Years after his Aſcenſion: But we find not one Word to this Purpoſe, but on the contrary, Chriſt aſſures us his *Kingdom* is not to be of this World; And when he had the faireſt Occaſion to rivet this Thought upon the Minds of his Diſciples, who were ſtuff'd with the Opinion of notable earthly Splendor and Greatneſs, he tells them not one Word of it, but aſſures them from the *Prophets* of the contrary: Beſides, the *idolatrous* Fardle of *Rome* ſhould bid faireſt for the Character of the true Church by this Way of reaſoning. What then can be thought of ſuch *Proteſtants* as adopt this Senſe, after *Grotius* and *Hamond*?

Laſtly, Some would have *v.* 1. taken literally, and to point at the Renovation of the decayed Creation; and here, by *the new Jeruſalem*, the State of the Church for the Space of a *Thouſand Years*: But I ſhewed the firſt Verſe is not to be underſtood ſtrictly in a literal Senſe; and therefore do rather incline the Two Emblems ſhould ſignify the ſame Thing, and repreſent the State of the Goſpel-Church upon Earth before the End of the World; with this inconſiderable Difference, that it is called *a new Heaven and a new Earth*, becauſe of its Extent; and *a new City*, becauſe of the Analogy betwixt a well-managed City and the Church: Tho' I do not refuſe, but then there will alſo be a new Face upon the World, in *Naturals* as well as *Spirituals*; and that this Condition of the Church will be as like Heaven as it is poſſible for any Thing in the Earth, and prove a ſure *Pledge* of it: And therefore we had Expreſſions much to this Purpoſe, *Chap.* iii. 12. which I ſhewed might be indifferently applied to an eminent State of Grace or Glory; tho' ſtill I am of the Mind it belongs more to the firſt, eſpecially here, as will appear when we come to canvaſs the Particulars. Here we have, 1. The Preface. 2. The Viſion. 3. A Similitude clearing the ſame.

The Preface, *I John ſaw*. It is not ſimply ſaid, *v.* 1, *I ſaw*. Here he puts in his Name, as he had done ſeveral Times before, particularly, *Chap.* i. 1, 4, 9. and afterwards, *Chap.* xxii. 8. which we are not to think the Apoſtle did out of any Piece of Vanity, but in Imitation of other divinely inſpired Writers, who often name themſelves, upon theſe Accounts, 1. To aſſert the Certainty of the Revelation; ſo he gives it under his Hand. 2. To diſcover his *cauſa ſcientiæ*, he had perſonal and occular Knowledge of what he relates, and therefore 'tis no cunningly deviſed Fable. 3. To declare the Greatneſs of the Thing; it will be no ordinary Step of Providence, but one of the moſt remarkable has been from the Beginning.

Next is the *Viſion*; where, 1. Its Deſignations. 2. Its Motion. 3. Whence it came.

1. The *Deſignations*, which are two, 1. *The holy City*. Of this ſee on *Chap.* xi. 2. It is to be taken for the ſame Thing, only there it pointed out the Church in her *wreſtling Condition*, here in her moſt *flouriſhing one*. 2. *The new Jeruſalem*; this, to be ſure, is another Name of the ſame Thing. We have this Deſignation, *Chap.* iii. 12. but nowhere elſe in Scripture. As for the diſtinguiſhing Property, *new*, it ſeems to be only in Oppoſition to *old Jeruſalem*, which was a Type of the *Goſpel-Church*; and if we will ſtretch it further, I ſee not how we can carry it higher, than thereby to underſtand more exalted State of the Church upon Earth; for nowhere in Scripture is the triumphant and glorified Church ſo deſigned. We have the Church called *the heavenly Jeruſalem*, Heb. xii. 22. and *Jeruſalem that is above*, Gal. iv. 26. But both theſe are by all underſtood of the Church upon Earth, and *v.* 10. of this Chapter. I own we find Heaven compared to a City, *Heb.* xi. 10. *He looked for a City which hath Foundations, whoſe Builder and Maker is God.* Again, *Heb.* xiii. 14. *Here we have no continuing City, but we ſeek one to come.* But in none of theſe Places is it called *Jeruſalem*; ſo that Scripture does by *Jeruſalem*, with whatever other Character it be joined, mean ſome State of the Church on this Side of Eternity, and therefore cannot be meant of *Heaven*. Which will be more plain when we view,

2. Its Motion, *Coming down*, or deſcending. We had this alſo, *Chap.* iii. 12. where I gave its Senſe: Nor will it mend the Matter to ſay, Only the *Emblem* came down from Heaven, for the Benefit of the *Propaet*; but that the *Signification* thereof will be in Heaven, and never leave theſe Abodes: For the *Truth* is to correſpond to the *Figure*. Beſides, it is a Promiſe in the *Quotation*, *That the Name of new* Jeruſalem *was to be written on them*: Now, if we take this Text as intirely meant of the *Emblem*, what is the Amount of the Promiſe, but this, they are to have the Name of a *Type* or *Figure written upon them*? which will be no great Privilege. But if we allow it to run in its natural Force, it will be very beautiful; for it is a Promiſe of all theſe comfortable Manifeſtations to be made to their Souls, which will abound when this laſt State of the Church comes: And thus theſe two Texts give Light to one another.

3. From whence it comes, *Out of Heaven*. This we had alſo, *Chap* iii. 12. with very little Variation; and therefore the ſame Senſe may obtain in both Places. From theſe two laſt Expreſſions, it ſeems plain, this State of the Church is, as from Heaven in its Original, ſo below in its Situation, and that it will increaſe by Degrees; none of which is agreeable to the Condition of the Bleſſed above.

The Similitude, clearing this, is, *Prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband*; which has a manifeſt Reference to *Chap.* xix. 7. *The Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made herſelf ready.* Where it was explained. If my Reaſons are good there, againſt the applying this to *Heaven*, they muſt be the ſame here: Nor need we enquire, Whether there be any new Emblem of a Woman: It is ſufficient the City

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be compared to one, eſpecially that it is called a *Woman*, Chap. xii. 1. and conſequently it is the ſame Thing meant by the *Woman* and the *City*.

3 And I heard a great Voice out of Heaven, ſaying, Behold, the Tabernacle of God *is* with Men, and he will dwell with them, and they ſhall be his People, and God himſelf ſhall *be* with them, *and* be their God.

4 And God ſhall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes: And there ſhall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Crying, neither ſhall there be any more Pain: For the former Things are paſſed away.

Here we have the firſt Voice, which is ſaid to be *great*, and therefore audible; and no Wonder, when we conſider whence it came, *from Heaven*, or out of Heaven; which is to be meant of that *Heaven* deſcribed, *Chapters* iv. and v. where he ſaw all the Emblems there mentioned: And tho' Heaven as the Theatre be not a Figure of the Church, yet what was there repreſented, plainly is; for, beſides the gracious and auguſt Preſence of the *holy* and *ever bleſſed Trinity*, we found the *whole Church* under the Emblems of the *Elders* and *living Creatures*: From that no doubt this Voice came, for we hear not of another *Heaven* in all the *Prophecy*. If it be enquired, Whoſe Voice it is? I anſwer, We may underſtand it of all there mentioned, except him who ſate on the Throne, whom we hear of in the next Verſe: And here the Voice ſpeaks of God in the *third Perſon*; therefore we may allow it to be the Voice of the *Elders* and *living Creatures*, who, upon the Diſcovery of this Emblem of that happy State of the Church, break forth in theſe Expreſſions. We may alſo allow this to have its Accompliſhment, when the Time comes, in the Acclamations of Joy will be then by all the Members of the Church.

The *Matter* uttered by this Voice is of more Moment, which we may reduce to theſe two Generals. The *1ſt* comprehends the poſitive Privileges of the Church, *v.* 3. The *2d* their ſpecial Immunities flowing therefrom. It is owned by theſe Authors, who would carry all this to *Heaven*, that the Expreſſions may well be applied to the Church on Earth; which is plainly an extorted Confeſſion, becauſe they are uſed by other Prophets concerning the *militant Church*, as we will ſee more plainly afterwards.

I. The poſitive Privileges of the Church, *v.* 3. The Expreſſions are ſtill with Alluſion to the *Jewiſh Oeconomy*; but are here to be underſtood of the Truth of theſe Types. We have the ſame Words of the *material Tabernacle* of old, *Lev.* xxvi. 11, 12. *I will ſet my Tabernacle among you, and will be your God, and ye ſhall be my People.* This Promiſe is turned over again by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, and, in the Judgment of moſt, underſtood of the *Goſpel-Church*, Ezek. xxxvii. 26, 27. *I will ſet my Sanctuary in the Midſt of them for evermore, my Tabernacle alſo ſhall be with them; yea, I will be their God, and they ſhall be my People.* The Apoſtle *Paul*, without any Eye to the *triumphant* Church, fits this to the *militant* Church in his own Time, 2 *Cor.* vi. 16. *God hath ſaid, I will dwell in them, and walk with them; and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my People.* In all theſe Places it is to be meant plainly of the Church on Earth: Yea, and I challenge any to produce one Inſtance, from all the *Prophets*, where theſe Expreſſions are to be underſtood of *Heaven*; and therefore we ſhould not apply them thereto here. This will be yet more evident, when we have glanced at the ſeveral Particulars, as here ranged;

1. The Symbol of God's Preſence, *The Tabernacle of God is with Men.* It is called *the Tabernacle of God*, with Alluſion to that *Tabernacle*, *Moſes* rear'd up in the Wilderneſs, at the Command of God, and in Oppoſition to the Tabernacles of the *Heathen* Idols: For they, in Imitation of God's Service, had alſo formed *Tents* for their Abominations, as we find challenged, *Amos* v. 26. *Ye have born the Tabernacle of your God* Moloch. Now, the Tabernacle was but an itinerant Symbol, and deſigned for Travel, to ſhew that the Church, as long as they had that among them, were in a travelling State. In this Senſe alſo we had it, *Chap.* xiii. 6. it is ſaid to be *with Men*, which to me ſays, it will be on Earth; for, were it to be meant of *Heaven*, it would be with Angels, as well as Men; elſe they muſt allow two different Appartments in Heaven, one for the Elect Angels, and another for the glorified Saints, which I never heard any aſſert. That it is ſaid to be *with Men*, is to overturn that Diſtinction of *Jews* and *Gentiles*: The firſt Tabernacle was only with the *Iſraelites*, and the reſt of the World were excluded therefrom; But when that Time comes, it will be the common Privilege of all the Children of Men, at leaſt of the far greater Part. Or, if they will adhere

here to this, that the Tabernacle is an Emblem of the glorious Preſence of God in Heaven, they muſt own an *Impropriety* in the Expreſſion, which ſhould be rather this, *Men will be with the Tabernacle of God*, and not as in the Text, *The Tabernacle of God will be with Men.*

2. The Promiſe of his *Preſence* in this Tabernacle, *And he will dwell with them*, or, he will *tabernacle* with them. Many a Time there are Symbols of God's Preſence while he is abſent; but, in this State, they will not only have the Marks of his Preſence, but *He* will be actually preſent with them. From the Whole, this ſays, the Ordinances, the ordinary Symbols of God's Preſence, will not be barren or unfruitful; for the Power and gracious Preſence of God will go along with them. Some, from this, fetch an Argument to prove the *perſonal Reign* of Chriſt with the *Saints upon Earth*, becauſe this Expreſſion is much a-kin to that, by this ſame Apoſtle, *John* i. 14. *The Word was made Fleſh, and dwelt among us*, or *tabernacled among us.* But this will not anſwer their Purpoſe; for, unleſs they prove the Tabernacle mentioned in the firſt Clauſe, to be the *Humane Nature* of Chriſt, which they not eſſay, nor indeed can they, this will not follow: Beſides, the Difference of the Phraſes in the two Texts will not allow ſuch an Inference. But we at Length conſidered the Whole of this groundleſs Opinion on the preceeding Chapter. The Whole I take to be in this, is, That the Fulneſs of the Bleſſing of the Goſpel ſhall accompany the Purity of its Diſpenſation, which at that Time will be very notable.

3. The *Quality* or *Nature* of the Church at that Time, *They ſhall be his People.* This is owned by all to be a moſt comprehenſive Expreſſion, and declares, theſe who are to flouriſh at that Time, will yield themſelves unto the Lord in the Terms of the Goſpel; for no leſs is neceſſary to conſtitute them the *People of God*: Which ſays, they will own the Lord for their God, and devote themſelves to his Fear; And further, that they will only own and cleave to the Lord, as he has revealed himſelf in Jeſus Chriſt. While both the firſt and this Clauſe are united, they illuſtrate that Prophecy, *That all the Kingdoms of this World ſhall become the Kingdom of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*: For *Men* in general are before-mentioned, and here they are ſaid to be his *People*; So that the full Senſe is, *All Men*, at leaſt the far greater Part of them, will become the *People of God*, and devote themſelves to his Fear, in the Terms of the new and everlaſting Covenant.

4. The Care and Concern of God about them, *God himſelf ſhall be with them, and be their God*; Or, cloſſer to the firſt Language, *God himſelf ſhall be with them, their God.* Which plainly expreſſeth the Goodneſs of God to them; And ſo the Senſe of it is, All that God is in himſelf, and can be communicate to others on this Side of Heaven, ſhall be made forthcoming to them; And is the ſame in Subſtance with that Promiſe, *Gen.* xvii. 7. *I will eſtabliſh my Covenant between me, and thee, and thy Seed after thee in their Generations, for an everlaſting Covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee.* Now, how this Manifeſtation of God can extend further than the adduced Promiſe carries it, I ſee not: And, we are ſure all of it concerns this Life, and therefore we may not transfer this Repetition of it to another, unleſs we had graver Reaſons.

The Senſe of the whole then ſeems to be this, Tho' God was mercifully preſent with his ancient People the *Jews*, and dwelt between the *Cherubims*, yet ſometimes they had very melancholly Evidences of his Withdrawings: But when this Time comes, the Church will not miſs him all that Thouſand Years; for he will exerciſe a moſt watchful and careful Providence in Mercy about them, for their Peace, Stability and Comfort.

II. We have the ſpecial *Immunities* of the Church in that Period, or, as ſome deſign them, their *negative* Privileges, *v.* 4. It contains an Account of theſe Evils they will be freed from, to which is ſubjoined a Reaſon both of theſe and the former.

1. A Freedom from all Sorrow, *God ſhall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes.* The Poſitive is, They ſhall be filled with all Comfort. We had this Clauſe before, and explain'd it, *Chap.* vii. 17. where I ſhewed it to be a temporal Bleſſing, tho' ſpiritual; the ſame may in all Reaſon be ſaid for it here.

2. A Freedom from Death, *There ſhall be no more Death.* Theſe who underſtand this of Heaven, ſay, There ſhall be no more Separation of the Soul from the Body, being once united after the Reſurrection: This, to be ſure, is true as applied; but, if they fail in the main Scope, as I think is proven they have, we will be under a Neceſſity to ſeek another Senſe, which the old Prophets will help to, without fleeing to *Heaven*; for they have the like Expreſſions of the comfortable State of the Church upon Earth, *Iſa.* xxv. 8. *He will ſwallow up Death in Victory, and the Lord God ſhall wipe away all Tears from all Faces, and the Rebuke of his People ſhall be taken away from off all*

all the Earth. 'Tis to be noted, that ſome who contend this Paſſage is to be meant of *Heaven*, make it a Fulfilling of *Iſaiah*'s Prophecy, tho' all own that *Prophet* is not ſpeaking of the *Church in Heaven*, but on *Earth*; and ſo the plain Senſe is, The Church will not be peſter'd with perſecuting Enemies: There will be no *violent* and *ſhameful Deaths* inflicted upon them; for under the *Reign* of the *Beaſt*, and the *falſe Prophet*, there were very many *Martyrs*, but then that Power will ceaſe: Beſides, I doubt not but this Clauſe may be an Accompliſhment of that ſolemn Promiſe, *Iſa.* lxv. 20. *There ſhall be no more thence an Infant of Days, nor an old Man that hath not fulfilled his Days*; And ſo it is a Promiſe of *Longevity*. The Age of Perſons will be lengthned out to a great Pitch beyond what we now have for ordinary. I will not ſay they ſhall arrive at the Gage of the Antedeluvian Patriarchs, for that is not promiſed; but we find they will live a long Time: For it it is ſaid, *Iſa.* lxv. 22. *For as the Days of a Tree, are the Days of my People.* Which plainly ſays, their Lives will be ſpun out to a greater Length than now; for many Trees ſubſiſt for ſome Hundreds of Years.

3. Immunity from Grief, *neither Sorrow.* This ſignifies properly *Sorrow* upon the Loſs of Relations, and is an immediate Conſequent of the former; for, where Death does not happen immaturely, then there is no Occaſion of exceſſive Grief: So that here there is a Promiſe to near and dear Relations, that they ſhall not be ſeparate by a violent, nor ſuddenly by a natural Death; Friends will not have Cauſe to lament theſe then.

4. Freedom from ſudden and diſquieting Alarms, *nor Crying.* Some make this the Diſcovery of the foregoing Grief; but the Force and Uſe of the Word ſignifies an *Alarm*, or what ſuddenly diſcompoſes, *Matth.* xxv. 6. *At Midnight there was a Cry made.* So that this is a Promiſe of Peace.

5. Freedom from Toil and hard Labour, *neither ſhall there be any more Pain.* We have this Word πόνος only thrice in the New Teſtament, and always in this *Prophecy*, before *Chap.* xvi. 10, 11. where its Senſe is more extenſive, and yet this is plainly couched up in it there; for their Caſe there is a very laborious and wreſtling One. But, among other *Authors*, it is remarked to point chiefly at the Uneaſineſs hard Word produceth; and is further clear from this, that it is derived from πένομαι, which ſignifies to *work hard for Food.* This was a Part of the Curſe inflicted on our firſt Parents, upon their Defection from God, *Gen.* iii. 17. *Curſed is the Ground for thy Sake, in Sorrow ſhalt eat of it all the Days of thy Life.* Here then there will be in a great Meaſure the Suſpenſion of that Curſe, which is exactly the Senſe of that Prophecy, *Iſa.* lxv. 23. *They ſhall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for Trouble.*

The Reaſon of all theſe we have in the laſt Clauſe, *For the former Things are paſſed away.* We have an Expreſſion to this Purpoſe by another Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* v. 17. *Old Things are paſſed away, and all Things are become new.* Which I take to be a greater Help to the Senſe of this, than another Text others improve, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 10. *When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in Part ſhall be done away.* But the plain Deſign of neglecting the firſt, and ſnatching at the other, is to eſtabliſh their grand Point, That the Whole of this Context is to be meant of a State of Glory. And, it is plain, the firſt does only ſpeak of a Renovation in Time, and jumps exactly with the given Senſe of the former Particulars: And ſo no more is to be meant but what we had on *v.* 1. the firſt Heaven and the firſt Earth paſſed away; There will than be a new Face upon the whole Creation, and, in Compariſon of what was before, it will appear to be quite new.

From what is ſaid, it appears we cannot with ſufficient Ground apply this to the State of the Glorified in Heaven; For tho' there be but a gradual Difference betwixt *Grace* and *Glory*, yet we nowhere have them exhibite to us under the ſame Expreſſions, nor repreſented by the ſame Emblems: Far leſs can this be meant of that State of the Church after *Conſtantine*'s Time; For in no Period of the Church, after the Beginning of the fourth Century hitherto, can theſe Expreſſions in any tolerable Senſe be juſtified. And as little Reaſon is there to imagine, with others, that all this reſpects the Converſion of the *Jews* their great Topick is, becauſe we have the Tabernable mentioned here: But we have the Truth or Thing ſignified by the Tabernacle may be applied to the *Gentile*, as well as the *Jewiſh* Church. As for other Thoughts, they being at a greater Diſtance from the given Scope of the Prophecy, till they be better eſtabliſhed, we ſhall take no Notice of them. This Voice then is an Evidence or Teſtimony given to the Truth of the Viſions in the Beginning of the Chapter.

5 And he that ſat upon the Throne ſaid, Behold, I make all Things new. And he ſaid unto me, Write: For theſe Words are true and faithful.

6 And he ſaid unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End: I will give unto him that is athirſt, of the Fountain of the Water of Life freely.

7 He that overcometh ſhall inherit all Things, and I will be his God, and he ſhall be my Son:

8 But the Fearful, and Unbelieving, and the Abominable, and Murderers, and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolaters and all Liars, ſhall have their Part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone, which is the ſecond Death.

Here we have the *next Voice*, and a ſecond *Teſtimony* to the *two Viſions* in the Beginning, and preparatory to the ſpecial Viſion following. A great many think, the Underſtanding of the Meaning of the firſt Clauſe, *He that ſat upon the Throne*, will unriddle all the reſt: Where we are to enquire, What the Throne is? And, who is the Sitter?

As for the *Throne*, all own there are but two Divine Thrones mentioned in this whole Prophecy; one where we find the *Three Perſons* of the *adorable Trinity*, and is deſcribed, *Chap.* iv. 2. This Throne we find about thirty Times mentioned before the laſt Judgment. The other *Throne* is that of Judgment, *Chap.* xx. 11. of which we hear nothing before. The Queſtion is, Which of theſe *Thrones* is pointed at here? All own, becauſe of the prefixed Particle, it is a known Throne: And many contend it is the Throne laſt mentioned, and ſo it is Chriſt ſpeaking from the *Throne of Judgment*. Yet it cannot be refuſed but that Throne is *occaſional*, and will continue no longer than the Work of the Day is over: And before that Throne all are to appear, both good and bad; and when both theſe are diſpoſed of, there is no further Occaſion for it. Beſides, while they apply this Viſion to the glorious Heavens, they cannot reconcile it with the *Throne of Judgment* placed in the Air, unleſs they alledge, after the Day of Judgment it will be tranſlated to Heaven; Which however they do not affirm, tho' indeed it is a neceſſary Inference from their Doctrine: And therefore it is preſumable, we are to underſtand this of the firſt Throne, mentioned *Chap.* iv. and in many other Places of this Prophecy.

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6 And he ſaid unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End: I will give unto him that is athirſt, of the Fountain of the Water of Life freely.

7 He that overcometh ſhall inherit all Things, and I will be his God, and he ſhall be my Son:

8 But the Fearful, and Unbelieving, and the Abominable, and Murderers, and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolaters and all Liars, ſhall have their Part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone, which is the ſecond Death.

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III. There is a Bundle of gracious Promiſes, which all ſeem to reſpect the temporal State of the Church: Theſe are in Number three;

1. *I will give him that is athirſt, of the Fountain of the Water of Life freely.* Theſe who apply this to the *Life to come*, are much ſtraitned about it; which has moved ſome, to ward off the Blow they foreſaw, to turn theſe *Promiſes* into *Hiſtories*, and ſo this runs, *I have given to him that is athirſt*, &c. But this is intolerable, to thwart the natural Conſtruction of a Text to ſerve a Deſign. Beſides, it is obſerved by the Learned, that, in Prophecies, many a Time the *Preterit* is put for the *Future*, to aſſure us, the Thing will as certainly come to paſs, as if it were fulfilled already; but nowhere we have the *Future* put for the *Preterit*. Others again make *him that is athirſt* in this Promiſe, and *him that overcometh* in the next, ſignify the ſame Thing: Yet, when they have done ſo, they gain nothing; for there may be a Victory in Time, as we proved on the Concluſion of the *ſeven Epiſtles*; yea, as great a Victory as is here ſpoken of. Nowhere however do we read that the Saints in Heaven are athirſt; this firſt Promiſe then has a manifeſt Reſpect to that great Goſpel-promiſe, *Iſa.* lv. 1. *Ho, every one that thirſteth, come ye to the Waters; and he that hath no Money, come, buy.* Which we have explained by our Lord, *John* iv. 14. *Whoſoever drinketh of the Water that I ſhall give him, ſhall never thirſt; but the Water that I ſhall give him, ſhall be in him a Well* [*Fountain*, the ſame Word in the Text] *ſpringing up into everlaſting Life.* Both theſe Texts are neceſſarily to be underſtood of *free Grace* beſtowed in Time, in order to eternal Life; and that is is to be meant of ſpiritual Communion with God in Time: Which mars all their Projects about Heaven, eſpecially if we add the Words of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Chap. ii. 13. *My People have committed two Evils, they have forſaken me the Fountain of living Waters, and have hewn out Ciſterns, broken Ciſterns that can hold no Water.* This Promiſe then is the ſame upon the Matter, but in different Words, with that, *Matth.* v. 6. *Bleſſed are they which do hunger and thirſt after Righteouſneſs, for they ſhall be filled.* Now it is certain that *Thirſt* is no Affection that the Saints in Heaven can be troubled with, when they are brought to theſe Rivers of Pleaſure which are at God's Right-hand for evermore.

2*d* Promiſe is, *v.* 7. *He that overcometh ſhall inherit all Things.* This is a Promiſe many run away with, and contend it cannot have its Accompliſhment in Time, and ſo think it is only to be meant of Heaven. But the learn'd Mr. *Marck* (who inclines as much to apply it this Way as any) owns ingenuouſly, The *Verb* κληρονομεῖν can only properly be underſtood of the *Acquiſition* of an Inheritance, and that *freely*, tho' there be no *actual Inveſtiture*: And he is right; for it is a *Metaphor* from the Cuſtom of attaining Places of Truſt, by *Choice*, whichever Way it was made: And ſo it points more at the Title than Poſſeſſion, eſpecially if there be a conſiderable Earneſt; and ſo the *Noun* is plainly uſed, *Rom.* viii. 17. *If Children, then Heirs,* κληρονόμοι, *Heirs of God*, &c. Yet it is plain theſe were not Poſſeſſors; we have as much ſaid, without any View to Heaven in Poſſeſſion, 1 *Cor.* iii. 21. *For all Things are yours*, &c.

3*d* Promiſe, *I will be his God, and he ſhall be my Son.* We heard of the Male-child, *Chap.* xii. 5. which, at this Period of the Church, will be grown and arrived at the Stature of a Man; and ſo the Senſe there given, with this Explication, is to take Place here. We had this with very little Variation above, *v.* 3. Only, inſtead of *He ſhall be my Son*, it is ſaid there, *They ſhall be my People*: Which Expreſſions in Scripture ſignify the ſame Thing. Tho' the Deſignation of *Son* ſeems to be nearer than that of *People*, yet it is no more than what falls to the Share of all the *People of God* even in Time, 1 *John* iii. 2. *Beloved, now we are the Sons of God*, i. e. by *Adoption*, which cannot be refuſed to be a *Filiation*. It is true, many contend, That *Adoption* ſignifies the *Reſurrection*, Rom. viii. 23. *Waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the Redemption of our Body.* I incline not to croſs the common Strain of Expoſitors upon the Place, but ſhall allow this to point at the *Reſurrection*, as they affirm; tho' I have no Difficulty to believe the Apoſtle may be thought to eye the State of the Church here ſpoken of, as much, if not more than a State of Glory. Yet, even allowing it in their Senſe, it will make nothing for their Purpoſe, unleſs they could either prove that *Adoption* always ſignifies the Condition of Saints after the Reſurrection, or that it neceſſarily does ſo here, which ſhould have been evicted from the Context; and this, from what is ſaid, will be hard Work. Beſides, we have only here a Promiſe, and not an Inveſtiture; and if the whole of this Paſſage concerns the Condition of the *Glorified*, as in their Mind it muſt do, then I contend they are to expect the Accompliſhment of no other Promiſe but that their Happineſs ſhall never end. But here it is only ſaid, They ſhall be the Sons of God; which plainly ſays they were not ſo before, or not in ſuch a Degree in all Times paſt, as this awaits them; Tho' at the ſame Time the *Tabernacle of God* is

with

with them, *i. e.* in their Senſe, they are in Heaven, *v.* 3. which is not indeed fortified by the Subſtantive in the *preſent Tenſe*, for that is *ſuppreſt*; and the bringing in the other two Verbs in the *Future*, will not ſay that ſhould be ſo too, for theſe additional Clauſes are plainly Effects of the former in the *preſent Tenſe*, as is obvious to every Eye.

IV. There is the Character and Lot of God's Enemies, *v.* 8. Some reckoning this to contain an Account of the eternal State of all theſe Sorts of People, thence conclude, all advanced concerning the *Elect* above, muſt reſpect their everlaſting Condition in Heaven. But others, with more Reaſon, yield whatever is to be ſaid of the Saints, we are to underſtand this of the temporal Wickedneſs and eternal Wretchedneſs of the Reprobate, becauſe none of theſe Sins can be committed by them in Hell. And, *v.* 15. of the following *Chapter*, they are all ſaid to be *without*, i. e. they do ſeparate themſelves, and are therefore rejected. It is a needleſs Queſtion, *Whether theſe eight Sorts of Sinners comprehend all the Wicked of the World?* Or, *if they may be reduced to a ſmaller Number?* Or, *if there be ſome Sinners cannot be comprehended under any of them?* We are ſure, the Deſignation of *Wicked*, *Filthy*, or *Unrighteous*, as they are all deſigned, may extend to, and comprehend each of them, if theſe Words be taken in their fulleſt Comprehenſion: But, if their Senſe be ſtraitned, and confined to ſome particular Kinds of Sin, as often we are obliged to do in Scripture, then we may find ſome Sinners will fall under none of theſe Characters. Yet I am ready to think, the few will be found to be ſo general as comprehend the moſt of Sinners, were we to eſtabliſh their utmoſt Comprehenſion from their Uſe in Scripture; Which, however, we wave, and ſhall only give a ſhort Hint at each of them.

1. *The Fearful*: Which is not to be meant of theſe that *fear God*, or of ſuch as have *Fears* from Weakneſs of Faith, or ſuch as are under the Terrors of God's Judgments, and thereby perſwaded to leave Sin, and cleave to Chriſt; but is to be meant of theſe, who, out of *ſlaviſh Fear of Man*, forſake the righteous Ways of God; and of theſe, who, out of a Regard to their Reputation and Intereſt, ſtifle their Conſcience, and will not glorify God, by a free, full, and open Confeſſion.

2. *The Unbelieving*. This, to be ſure, muſt be taken in Oppoſition to the Faith of Chriſt, and Obedience to his Goſpel, as it commonly ſignifies in Scripture, whether in *Whole* or in *Part*. The firſt are called *Infidels*, the other *Hereticks*.

3. *The Abominable*. This is a Word of many Significations, but always it points at the moſt conſummate Piece of Wickedneſs, and indeed ſhould not be named: It is therefore here clothed with ſuch a Term, as ſhews its Vileneſs, and yet ſuppreſſeth the particular Sin, and ſo we incline to huddle it up in this General.

4. *Murderes*: Which comprehends all theſe Sins forbidden in the ſixth Commandment, which may be met with every where.

5. *Whoremongers*. This comprehends all theſe Sins forbidden in the ſeventh Commandment.

6. *Sorcerers*. This we had, *Chap.* ix. 21. where I ſhewed it was to be taken *myſtically*, which cannot be the Senſe of it here, but is to be extended to all Pieces of *Devilry*, whether by direct *Compact* with that wicked One; or *indirectly*, as Soothſayers, and theſe who work by Charms, or are ſkill'd in Poiſoning.

7. *Idolaters*. This comprehends all Kinds of *Idolatry*, either who chooſe another *Object* of Worſhip than the true God, in Oppoſition to the firſt Command; or theſe who take a falſe Way of worſhipping the true God, in Oppoſition to the *ſecond* Command.

8. *All Liars*. The greateſt Debate is about this, becauſe they are all attrocious Kinds of Sin mentioned before, therefore they think, this muſt ſignify ſome aggravated Sort of *Lie*, that can raiſe the Guilt of the Committer to a Level with theſe above-mentioned: Yet they are not agreed as to the particular Sort of *Lie*. But, I preſume, they are out of it who reaſon thus; for the former Sins are not be meant of the higheſt Step of Guilt in their ſeveral Kinds, but muſt comprehend all the inferior Degrees, which is a neceſſary Rule in expounding the *Decalogue*. Others again, becauſe it reads *All Liars*, would have the Meaning to be all *Sorts* of Liars. No doubt all of them are ſinful, and expoſed to the *Wrath* and *Diſpleaſure* of God, who is a God of Truth; Yet ſtill I think ſomething further is comprehended therein, becauſe of the *Particle* of *Univerſality*, all which does not uſher in the other *Seven*. Yet here the Learned are not agreed: For ſome think by this, we are to mean a General comprehends all Sins, not mentioned in the other *Seven*; And ſo the Senſe of it is, all other Sorts of Sinners. They are the rather fortified in this Thought, that they find all Sorts of Sins expreſſed in Scripture by *Lie*. Tho' this may be granted, yet, ſeeing there is ſtill ſome particular Sin pointed at in all the reſt, it is not unjuſt it may be ſo here: Nor will the Mark of *Univerſality* hinder; for it may point at ſome Sin which appears in many Shapes, and all of them hateful to God:

And therefore, I am ready to believe, they are neareſt the Truth, who, by *all Liars*, underſtand all Sorts of *Hypocrites*, for theſe are *Liars* in the moſt accented Senſe; and this ſeems to be the Meaning of what we have afterwards, *Chap.* xxii. 15. *Thoſe that love and make a Lie.*

Laſtly, we have the Lot of all theſe, *They ſhall have their Part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone, which is the ſecond Death.* I had Occaſion to ſpeak of all the Terms in this Clauſe before, *Chap.* xix. 20. *Chap.* xx. 14. Only here we are to remark theſe two Differences; 1. It is ſaid, they ſhall have *their Part*, which declares they are to have Neighbours or Copartners: Theſe are not the only Perſons doom'd to everlaſting Burnings, for the *Beaſt* and *falſe Prophet* were ſent there long before, and ſo was the *Devil* and *his Angels*, Chap. xx. 10. So that the Lot of the Wicked will be the ſame with that of the fallen Angels. And, while it is ſaid this will be their Part, or Lot, or Portion, for all ſignify the ſame Thing, it ſhews nothing more remains for them, and this will be the everlaſting Portion of their Cup. 2. It is ſaid, *they ſhall have it*, in the Future, and not either in the *preterit* or *preſent*; and therefore we muſt underſtand this to be ſpoken before the Day of Judgment, and after the Fall of *Babylon*, which ſtill reſtricts theſe Viſions to the Earth.

VISION V.

NExt we have a particular Account of the State of the Church in its moſt beautiful Condition on Earth, from *v.* 9. of this *Chap.* to *v.* 6. of the following. Which we may conſider in theſe Parts, 1. The Introduction, in *v.* 9, and 10. 2. The Viſion itſelf, to *v.* 22. 3. Several very diſtinguiſhing and greatning Excellencies thereof, to *v.* 6. of *Chap.* xxii.

9 And there came unto me one of the ſeven Angels, which had the ſeven Vials full of the ſeven laſt Plagues, and talked with me, ſaying, Come hither, I will ſhew thee the Bride, the Lamb's Wife.

10 And he carried me away in the Spirit, to a great and high Mountain: ——

Here we have, 1. The Speaker. 2. The Speech. 3. The Action. 4. The Place.

1. The *Speaker*, or we may deſign him the *Meſſenger*, for all the *Angels* were ſent to *John*; *There came unto me one of the ſeven Angels, which had the ſeven Vials full of the ſeven laſt Plagues.* We had all this before, *Chap.* xv. 1. *Chap.* xvii. 1. Some think this is the *firſt* of the ſeven Angels, but the Text will not give Ground for this. Others think this to be the ſame *Angel* that ſpoke, *Chap.* xvii. becauſe he is deſcribed the ſame Way. It is not impoſſible it ſhould be ſo; yet it is not ſo probable as they think: Nor does their Reaſon ſeem concluding upon that main Topick, That *that Angel* was the *fitteſt*, to point out the Glory of the *Church*, who had repreſented to him the *Fall* of *Babylon*; for they were all equally fit, when inſtructed and ſent of God. Nor will this conclude more, than that the Angel that poured out the *firſt Vial*, was *fitteſt* to diſcharge the *ſecond*, &c. Yet we were ſure there were *Seven* appointed for that Work. Beſides, I think it more probable, if it had been the ſame Angel, *John* would have known his Order, as well as he remembred himſelf, by his former Work. But, which of the *Seven* he was, I ſee not how with any Certainty can be determined, nor indeed is it material. Some tell again, He is thus deſcribed, on Purpoſe to aſſure us, this *new Jeruſalem* will ſubſiſt under all the *ſeven Vials*: Yet it is plain, tho' the *Vial* was in the *Angel*'s Hand, it was poured out before. I grant, however, that the *Advancement* of the Church will be carried on *pari paſſu*, with the Deſtruction of her Enemies; But that moſt flouriſhing State thereof will not commence, but from the pouring out of the *laſt Vial*, and from that Time, will continue a full Thouſand Years.

2. The Angel's Speech, *Talked with me, ſaying, Come hither, I will ſhew thee the Bride, the Lamb's Wife.* All this we had before, *Chap.* xvii. 1. but the Thing promiſed, differs much from what we had there revealed, *viz. The Judgment of the great Whore*; but here, it is *the Bride, the Lamb's Wife.* Who this is, we explained, and alſo vindicate, *Chap.* xix. 7. And that here ſhe is called both a *Bride*, which is the Deſignation of a Woman *betrothed* before Marriage, and a *Wife*, which is the Character commonly given a Woman after Marriage, will make no Difficulty; for the Scripture calls a promi-

promiſed Spouſe a *Wife*, Gen. xxix. 21. *Jacob ſaid unto* Laban, *Give me my Wife.* Yet it is plain they were not married. So the Angel ſaid to *Joſeph*, Mat. i. 20. *Fear not to take unto thee* Mary *thy Wife.* Yet we know ſhe was a Virgin. From the Whole, it is plain, this has a ſpecial Reſpect to what was advanced before on *v.* 2. of this Chapter, *the new* Jeruſalem *prepared as a Bride adorned*, &c.

3. The Action, *He carried me away in the Spirit*, explained, *Chap.* xvii. 3.

4. The Place, *A great and high Mountain.* Tho' the *Prophet* changed the *Place*, his Frame and Diſpoſition was the ſame. He ſaw this Viſion before in the Wilderneſs: If it was the ſame Emblem, then it muſt be at a greater Diſtance. If it was another, yet it was more expreſſive of the Thing; tho', by comparing the 2d *v.* of this Chapter with this, it would appear the Emblem was the ſame, and that by his Tranſportation from a *low* to an *high* Place, he had the greater Advantage to conſider particularly what was repreſented; eſpecially if we ſuppoſe him in this *Theatre* to be brought nearer. Beſides, there is a great Harmony betwixt this and other Places of Scripture: When *Moſes* was to be bleſt with a near View of the promiſed Land, *Deut.* xxxiv. 1. he muſt go to the Top of *Mount* Piſgah. When the Devil tempted our Lord by the Bait of Ambition, *Mat.* iv. 8. *He carried him unto an exceeding high Mountain, and ſhewed him all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them.* When *Ezekiel* had the Viſion of that *new Jeruſalem* in his Prophecy, which ſome, not without Ground, think to be the ſame with this, it is ſaid, *Ezek.* xl. 2. *He ſet me upon a very high Mountain:* So that the *Prophet* was higher than the City, and therefore, could the better obſerve all in and about it; for *Landskips* are beſt taken from an *Height.* This, I think, ſays, it was not the Viſion of the *triumphant Church* in Heaven, but of ſome State of the *Church* upon *Earth.*

It is objected, Why might not the *Prophet* have an Emblem of Heaven even upon Earth, ſeeing it was not the real Seat of the Glorified, but a Figure thereof? *Anſwer.* We have no emblematick Repreſentation of Heaven in all the Scripture, unleſs this be it: Now, I would fain know with what Reaſon any Man can transfer this Viſion to Heaven, ſeeing they have no parallel Paſſage to ſuppport their Thoughts; for, whatever Difficulty be in *Ezekiel's* City, it is generally owned to repreſent ſome State of the Church upon Earth. Beſides, one would think the *Theatre* of the ſecond Viſion, *Chap.* iv. would have been more proper for a View of the everlaſting Glory, than any Mountain upon Earth.

Some again tell us, There is no Mountain in all this little Iſland, that deſerves the Characters given this, *viz. great* and *high.* Anſw. This is not *good*; for it is ſufficient this Mountain be by far the greateſt in all *Patmos.* Again, why may we not imagine the Mountain to be a Figure as well as all the reſt of the Viſion? for that would exactly anſwer all the Deſign, and ſo there would be no Neceſſity to imagine our *Prophet* to be tranſported to Mount *Taurus*, or ſome other of theſe prodigious *Mountains* in *Aſia.*

Next we have the Viſion itſelf, to *v.* 22. where we have what was called *the Bride the Lamb's Wife*, repreſented by a City; juſt as we found what was called the *great Whore*, Chap. xvii. 1. called, *v.* 18. of that Chapter, *that great City which reigneth over the Kings of the Earth*, and often called *Babylon*: And, in Oppoſition thereto, this City is called *Jeruſalem*, and is ſo repreſented as to have the Advantage of *Babylon* in every Thing. Here we are to notice theſe Things, 1. A general Account of this City, *v.* 10, and 11. 2. An an Account of its Walls and Gates, to *v.* 15. 3. The Dimenſions of the City, and its Walls, to *v.* 18. 4. The Materials of the City, Walls, and Gates, to *v.* 22.

10 — And ſhewed me that great City, the holy Jeruſalem, deſcending out of Heaven from God,

11 Having the Glory of God: And her Light *was* like unto a Stone moſt precious, even like a Jaſper-ſtone, clear as Cryſtal;

In this general Account is, 1. The Deſignation. 2. The Appearance of the City.

1. The *Deſignation* of this City, in Oppoſition to *Babylon*; *That great City, the holy* Jeruſalem, *deſcending out of Heaven, from God.* All this was explained, *v.* 2. except that here it is called *great.* I remarked before, he ſaw it only at a Diſtance, and therefore gave but a general and very faint Account thereof; But, now being brought nearer, he gives a more accurate and particular Deſcription of it, and aſſures us it was *great.* The Senſe of this is to be brought from *Chap.* xvii. 18. where *Babylon* is called that *great City*; And the Reaſon is given, becauſe *ſhe reigneth over the Kings of*

the Earth. And ſo, for that ſame Reaſon, is the *Church* called *a great City*, becauſe, *v.* 24. of this Chapter, *The Nations of them that are ſaved, walk in the Light thereof; and the Kings of the Earth do bring their Glory and Honour to it.* Which aſſures us, the Church of God at that Time will be as great in Power and Extent as ever *Babylon* had been; and therefore it is expreſſed in the ſame Words with the Character of *Babylon, That great City.*

2. The *Appearance* of this City, deſcribed in two Kinds of Expreſſions,

(1.) One proper, *Having the Glory of God*, v. 11. This is a Deſcription of the Preſence of God, and alludes to the *cloudy* Indication thereof, often in the *Tabernacle*, and ſometime in the *Temple*: But here the whole *City* is filled therewith. We had the Glory of the *Divine Juſtice* repreſented by *Smoke*, Chap: xv. 8. here we have his *Glory* without Smoke, yea, without a Cloud; which ſays, Then there will be no dark *Types*, or *ceremonial Diſcoveries* of God, as in the old Diſpenſation. And therefore, when this is amplified, *v.* 22, 23. it is ſaid, *I ſaw no Temple therein*, i. e. no particular Spot ſequeſtrate for the Divine Manifeſtations; for the Glory of God will be diffuſed through the whole City. The ſame is ſaid of *Ezekiel*'s City, *Ezek.* xlviii. 35. *The Name of that City from that Day, ſhall be* Jehovah Schamma, *i. e. The Lord is there.* Then will be compleatly fulfilled that Prophecy of our Lord, *John* iv. 23. *The Hour cometh, and now is, when the true Worſhippers ſhall worſhip the Father in Spirit and Truth*: Which will be plainer from the

(2.) Expreſſion, which is by Compariſon, or a Similitude, *Her Light was like unto a Stone moſt precious, even like a Jaſper-Stone, clear as Cryſtal.* God's gracious Preſence is often expreſſed *by Light*, Pſal. xxvii. 1. *The Lord is my Light and my Salvation.* And when the *Pſalmiſt* prays for God's Favour, he uſeth the ſame Expreſſion, *Pſal.* iv. 6. *Lord, lift thou up the Light of thy Countenance upon us.* Pſal. xxxvi. 9. *In thy Light we ſhall ſee Light.* The Preſence of God was dark and *cloudy* under the Law; But, in this State of the Church, there will be a clear and full Manifeſtation of God. Which is further inſtructed by the Example of a *Jaſper-Stone.* God is compared to this, *Chap.* iv. 3. where we enquired into the Nature of this moſt precious Stone; the Senſe muſt be the ſame here: And this is ſaid to be *clear as Cryſtal*, which is the moſt tranſparent of all Stones; And *Lapithiſts* tell us, The beſt *Jaſpers* are *clear* like *Cryſtal.* All which ſhews how notable the Preſence of God then will be, in the Church, and further confirms our general Senſe of the Viſion, that it does not concern *Heaven*, but may be better applied to that glorious Condition of the Church upon the *Earth*, which will have the Advantage of all former Periods.

12 And had a Wall great and high, and had Twelve Gates, and at the Gates Twelve Angels, and Names written thereon, which are *the Names* of the Twelve Tribes of the Children of Iſrael.

13 On the Eaſt Three Gates, on the North Three Gates, on the South Three Gates, and on the Weſt Three Gates.

14 And the Wall of the City had Twelve Foundations, and in them the Names of the Twelve Apoſtles of the Lamb.

Here the City is deſcribed in its Strength and Fortifications; which plainly ſays, the Church will be in a militant, and not triumphant State: For, wherever we read of Walls and Gates, they are for Defence, and ſuppoſes the Place is liable to an Attack. Now, who can aſſault the Glorified in Heaven? ſeeing Satan and his Angels, yea, and all the Wicked, will be fettered with Chains of everlaſting Darkneſs; ſo that nothing is to be feared from them. This is further evident from the Sentinals which watch the Gates of this City. Will any ſay in Reaſon, there is Watching and Warding in Heaven? So that theſe very Arguments they bring to eſtabliſh and ſupport their Hypotheſis, deſtroy the ſame. I grant, the Expreſſions are prophetical and figurative; but that will not conclude they ſhould therefore be applied to Heaven, eſpecially that nowhere elſe in Scripture theſe Terms are uſed to expreſs the Joys of Heaven, but often are applied to the Church on Earth; as will caſt up from the Conſideration of Particulars, which we thus range from their Order in the Words, 1. A general Account of the Walls. 2. The Deſcription of the Gates, *v.* 12, & 13. 3. A further Account of the Foundations of the Walls, *v.* 14.

I. There is a general Account of the *Wall, great and high.* There is a plain Congruity betwixt this Deſcription of the *new Jeruſalem*, and the *Zion* and *Jeruſalem David* deſcribes, *Pſal.* xlviii. & cxxii. both which, all own to be meant of the *Goſpel-Church*,

Church; and many are of the Mind, these Plagues will not be fully accomplished, till that happy State of the Church come. As for the Meaning of the Word τεῖχος, some would have it to signify *murus*, the Wall of an House; others *mœnia*, the Wall of a City: But it is plain, both from the Force and Use of the Word, it must signify the Wall of a City. It comes from τεύχω, *struo*, *to build*, or rather to *fence*: It is never used in the New Testament, but to express the Walls of a City, *Acts* ix. 25. *They let him down by the Wall in a Basket.* Heb. xi. 30. *By Faith the Walls of* Jericho *fell down.* Yet, to be sure, it is to be taken in a *figurative* Sense: These who take all the rest literally, are at a loss about this, and therefore pass it over *superficially*. By this *Wall*, we are to mean the *Fence* of this *City*, as we have it often used in Scripture, *Isa.* v. 2. *He fenced it*; originally, he built a Wall about it, *Jer.* li. 44. *The Wall of* Babylon *shall fall.* Now, concerning the *Fence* of the Church, we have it *graphically* described, *Isa.* xxvi. 1. *Salvation will God appoint for Walls and Bulworks.* So that the Sense is, God by a special Providence will be all to his Church, that Walls can be to a City, *Psal.* cxxv. 2. *As the Mountains are about* Jerusalem, *so the Lord is round about his People, from henceforth and for ever.* The Adjuncts of this Wall are two,

1. *Great.* This may both comprehend the *Compleatness* of the Fence (and so it says, no Part of the City will be unfenced, but it will be altogether inclosed) and the *Thickness* thereof, which is necessary, considering its Height; for its Height otherwise would weaken it.

2. *High.* It was the Excellency of fortified Cities, that their Walls were very high; as we read, *Deut.* iii. 5. *All these Cities were fenced with high Walls.* And the Report of the Spies bore, *That the Cities were walled up to Heaven*, Deut. i. 28. *i. e.* they were exceeding high, as we heard of the Wall of *Babylon*. And here the *Church* will outdo her, for *her Defence shall be the Munition of Rocks*; so that it shall not be possible to scale her Wall.

II. We have the *Gates* of this City particularly accounted for. We find *Gates* very often the most notable Places of Cities of old, not only because most Art and Expence were imployed about them, but also because they were the ordinary Places where Justice was administred, where all publick Deeds were promulgate, as at our Crosses. Yet I cannot think these are the only or main Thing pointed at by *Gates* here; for I take the Signification of them in this Place, to be Entrances, or Doors, that lead into the Heart of the City: And more, that they signify such *Avenues* as are designed only for the *Denisons* of the City. About these Gates we are to notice, 1. Their Number. 2. Their Sentinels. 3. Their Inscription. 4. Their Disposition.

1. Their Number, *Twelve*. *Ezekiel* says the same of his *City*, Ezek. xlviii. 31. which seems to indicate both *Prophets* are speaking of the same *City*. Some say, This is only to assure us the Place is no Prison: But it would be considered, a Paradise may have but one *Entry*. Others say, It is to make Way for a speedy and numerous Accession to this City: But then they lose their Design, if this be meant of the Church *triumphant*; for, after they Day of Judgment, none can have Access thereto: But if it be meant of the Church *militant*, there is no Difficulty; for then there will be *abundant Access ministred unto that Heavenly Kingdom.* The Number *Twelve* is to correspond to the Twelve Tribes of *Israel*, in which I cannot find any Mystery, further than that some of all the Tribes, yea, the Bulk of them that are then on the Earth, shall be admitted thereto.

2. The *Sentinels* at the Gates, *Twelve Angels*. These are not set here to open the Gates; for, *v.* 25. *They are not to be shut Day or Night.* These who understand this of Heaven, are at a Loss what Work to give these Angels. Some tell us, The Angels are imployed about the *Elect* during their Life, and at their Death carry their Souls to everlasting Bliss; yet they do not give this as the Meaning of the Place. Others again make these Angels the *Reapers*, of which Christ speaks, *Mat.* xxiv. 31. They seem to be no nearer the Truth; for these *Reapers* gather in the *Elect* from the four Winds of Heaven, and their Work is before the Day of Judgment; whereas, according to their grand *Hypothesis*, the Work of these Angels is after the same. But then, if these *Angels* mentioned by our Saviour should be *Ministers* of the Gospel, as many with good Reason affirm, they will have nothing to say; but, take them as we will, their Notion is overturned. The Angels, then, I take to be Gospel-Ministers fixed on the several Watch-Towers, to *invite* and *welcome* to Christ, all that come on his own Terms; and are Twelve, to bear Proportion to the Gates: There will then be a great Plenty of Labourers in God's Harvest.

3. The Inscription on these Gates, *Names written thereon, which are the Names of the Twelve Tribes of the Children of* Israel. This still alludes to the City of *Ezekiel*, Chap. xlviii. where we have particular Mention of these *Twelve Gates*, and that every

Gate had the Name of a particular *Tribe* written thereon. I doubt not but more is comprehended here, than Expoſitors have yet hit: In the mean Time, I cannot oppoſe theſe, who underſtand this of the *Jews* immediately and directly; as we did that in *Chap.* vii. I am the rather inclined to this, that afterwards we read of the *Gathering of the Nations thereto*, v. 24. Yet I cannot ſay, from this we are to conclude the *Jews* will be repoſſeſt of their old Tenement of *Paleſtine*, or that they will be diſtinguiſhed by their *Tribes*; Tho' it is very plain, there will be the Reduction of very many of all the *Tribes*. We read of the Converſion of 144000 before this Period, as the *Firſt-fruits*; *but then all* Iſrael *ſhall be ſaved*. That there is ſuch Mention made of this *ancient* People, both here and formerly, is to encourage them to enter theſe *Gates* when the Time comes, and alſo to move the *Church* in all Ages to pray for it; And further to lay a ſure Ground for the Removal of their *Reproach*, which is very great at this Day; And to move both *Jews* and *Gentiles* to join together in the high Praiſes of their great Saviour, who makes them both one, and *ſlays the Enmity, after he breaks down the Partition-wall.*

4. The *Diſpoſition* of theſe Gates, *v.* 13. *Three* to each of the four cardinal Points of the Earth. This exactly agrees with the Deſcription of *Ezekiel's City*, Ezek. xlviii. 31. with theſe Differences, (1.) *Ezekiel* gives an Account of the particular *Tribes* were inſcribed on every *Gate*, which is not done here; for if we incline to deſign theſe Gates, we cannot have a ſurer Method than to follow the old Prophet, and thence bring the Senſe of the new; tho', in the mean Time, we would be at a Loſs to know the particular Name inſcribed on every Gate infallibly, except four, *viz.* the Middlemoſt of every three: As for Example, *Ezekiel* tells us, On the *North-Side* of the City were *three Gates*, one of *Reuben*, one of *Judah*, one of *Levi*; whence it is preſumable, yet not certain, that *Judah*'s Gate was in the Middle; but whether that of *Reuben* was on the Weſt or Eaſt of it, is not ſaid: And tho' all theſe were evident, I ſee not how they could help to the Senſe of the Paſſage. (2.) Difference is, *Ezekiel* begins at the *North*, then paſſeth to the *Eaſt*, and ſo to the *South*, &c. whereas our Prophet begins at the *Eaſt*, and paſſeth to the *North*; from thence he croſſeth the City to the *South*, and ends as the other did at the *Weſt*. This, in my Opinion, is a weak Foundation to ground ſome curious but uncertain Speculations upon, *viz.* That it is deſign'd to inform us of the *Progreſs* of the Goſpel, and of the *Rout* it will take, that it will riſe firſt in *Aſia*, which they make the *Eaſt*; and thence march to the *North*, i. e. *Europe*, &c. For, while the two Prophets range them differently, we may conclude this Fancy did not occur to them, and that the plain Meaning is, all theſe *Gates* will be imployed at the ſame Time, and many entring in at them. There is no doubt there is an Alluſion to the ancient City of *Jeruſalem*, but not in this Diſpoſition of the Gates: For *Joſephus*, who owns *Jeruſalem* had Twelve Gates, tells us, *Five* were on the *Eaſt*, *Three* on the *North*, and *Four* on the *Weſt*, but *none* on the *South*. As little can I think theſe *Three Gates*, ſo often mentioned, ſhould repreſent to us *Baptiſm* in the Name of the *holy Trinity*; for this is but to fiſh for *Myſteries* without Warrant. That which ſeems to be the Import thereof is, that the State of the Church will be perfectly proportionable and beautiful, and that great Multitudes will flock into the ſame from all Corners of the World; As the *Lord* ſaith, *Iſa.* xliii. 5, 6. *Fear not, for I am with thee, I will bring thy Seed from the Eaſt, and gather thee from the Weſt: I will ſay to the North, Give up; and to the South, Keep not back; bring my Sons from far, and my Daughters from the Ends of the Earth.* All own this to be a Prophecy concerning the Goſpel-State of the Church, which has been in Part fulfilled already, but will be more fully accompliſhed afterwards. This alſo may allude to the *Incampment* of the Children of *Iſrael* in the Wilderneſs, by the Command of God, *Numb.* ii. 3, *&c.* For Three Tribes pitched their Tents to each of the four Corners of the Earth, and the *Tabernacle* of the Teſtimony in the Centre; yet are they not there diſpoſed according to *Ezekiel's* Viſion. From the whole we may infer, that the State of the Chriſtian Church, at that Time here propheſied of, will as far exceed any Thing before it, as the Condition of the *Jews* when poſſeſſed of the promiſed Land, and when the Temple of God was at *Jeruſalem*, did exceed and excel their wandering and wilderneſs Condition. From this alſo we are furniſhed with an Argument to prove this to be no *Deſcription* of *Heaven*, but of that *bleſſed State* of the Church, when the *Lamb's Wife* will be very fruitful: For at theſe Gates will Multitudes enter.

III. We have a further Account of the Wall and its Foundations, *v.* 14. *The Wall of the City had Twelve Foundations*, &c. This appears another Argument, proving the whole Context to reſpect a *Temporal* Condition of the Church; becauſe we read the Names of the *Twelve Apoſtles* of the *Lamb* are upon them; whereby we can underſtand

derſtand nothing elſe but the Doctrine and Labour of the *Apoſtles*, by which the *Church*, under the Conduct of the *Holy Spirit*, was at *firſt* hatched, is as *yet* continued, and will at *laſt* be perfected. Many who hold the other Side of the Queſtion, own this may be the Senſe of it: But others eſſay to carry off the Force of this Argument by a ſtrain'd Explication of the ſeveral Parts of the Words, which I ſhall endeavour to redargue in theſe few Conſiderations;

1. They ſay, *Foundation* is not to be taken properly here, *Chriſt* being the only Foundation, 1 *Cor.* iii. 11. *For another Foundation can no Man lay than that is laid, which is Chriſt Jeſus*; And therefore the Apoſtles cannot be Foundations. I anſwer, Even in that Text *Foundation* is not taken *properly*, nor did ever any aſſert it; But the Meaning is, *Chriſt* is the ſame to his Church that the *Foundation* is to a Wall, *i. e.* he ſupports, ſtrengthens, and eſtabliſheth the ſame, which never any ſound in the Faith deny'd. Yet this will not ſay but the *Apoſtles* in their Turn may be alſo by the Grace of God uſeful this Way; and therefore it is ſaid, *Eph.* ii. 20. Believers *are built upon the Foundation of the Prophets and Apoſtles, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief Corner-ſtone.* Where it is very evident, the *Apoſtles* being *Foundations*, is no Prejudice to Chriſt, who is the great Foundation upon which theſe are built; and ſo they may be called *Foundations under Chriſt*, or as commiſſionate by him. We find the *Apoſtles* alſo called *Pillars* of the Church; yet do they not bear the *prime* Foundation, but he beareth them. Again, we find the Church called *the Pillar and Ground of Truth*, 1 Tim. iii. 15. Yet it is owned by all, that the Pillar and Ground which ſupports the Church is the *Truth*. The plain Truth of this Text then is this, the Church maketh it her great Work to maintain and propagate the Truths of Chriſt, againſt all Oppoſers. Further, we find that Piece of Charity which relieves the Indigent, called a Foundation, 1 *Tim.* vi. 18, 19. *That they do Good, that they may be rich in good Works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate, laying up in Store for themſelves a good Foundation for the Time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal Life.* All comprehended here is, that a charitable Diſpoſition is a good Sign of a Perſon's gracious State, if it be joined with other Graces. From all which, we may conclude the Senſe of this Word ſhould not be too much ſtraitned or reſtricted, and then the *Apoſtles* may be called the *Foundations* of this Houſe, or City, or Wall, or the *New Teſtament Church*.

2. They ſay, The Apoſtles are not the Twelve Foundations; but only that their Names are written upon them. I anſwer, This is not to be meant of the Apoſtles perſonally, but of their Doctrines; juſt as the *Law* and the *Old Teſtament-Prophecies* are called *Moſes* and the *Prophets*, Luke xvi. 29. *They have* Moſes *and the Prophets*: Yet all of them were dead long before. But the Meaning is, they have the *Law Moſes* delivered, and the *Sermons* the *Prophets* preached: So at that Time they will have all the Writings of the *Apoſtles*, *i. e.* the whole New Teſtament, according to which that State of the Church will be exactly framed. Beſides theſe, we cannot find *twelve Foundations* different from them, unleſs ſome would fall in with the mad Fancies of *Joachimus Abbas*, who dream'd there will be twelve *new Apoſtles* raiſed up about the End of Time, who will have the whole World canton'd out among them until the Day of Judgment. This has no Foundation in Scripture: Beſides, theſe Apoſtles are ſpoken of, as well known unto the Church; and therefore we can no more believe theſe to be the twelve *new* Apoſtles never before heard of, than we can think the *twelve Tribes* above-mentioned to be different from the *Tribes* of *Jacob*, which never any to my Knowledge thought of.

Obj. There were more than Twelve Apoſtles, for they were compleat Twelve when *Matthias* was put in the Room of *Judas*; and *Paul* was added, which made them Thirteen: And ſome talk of others alſo. *Anſ.* We can alſo count *Thirteen Tribes* of *Iſrael*, yet they are commonly reckoned *Twelve*, becauſe they were no more at the firſt: The ſame may be ſaid of the *Apoſtles*.

Some contend, By theſe *Twelve* Foundations on which the Apoſtles *Names* are written, we are to underſtand that *Creed* commonly called the *Apoſtles Creed*, conſiſting of Twelve *Articles*, which ſome ignorantly apprehend was compoſed in a full Council of all the twelve *Apoſtles*, each of them adding an Article. It muſt be owned this does not obtain amongſt the Learned of any Sort, no not among the Papiſts themſelves: (For *Du Pine* has proven this Teſt of Orthodoxy to be long after the Demiſe of all the Apoſtles; and that it grow up *Article* by *Article*, as Errors appeared in the Church; and that one of the Clauſes thereof, *viz. He deſcended into Hell*, was not heard of till Popery had advanced to a good Height. There are other Diſquiſitions about this by many learned Proteſtants; and therefore theſe *twelve Foundations* cannot be theſe twelve Articles, but muſt comprehend all the Doctrine of *all* the *Apoſtles*. This proves, that State of the Church will have a perfect Harmony with the *Primitive*, in both *Faith* and *Manners*; and conſequently it is the Deſcription of the Church upon Earth, and not in Hea-

ven; becauſe ſeveral Things are *neceſſary* to the *one*, will be *uſeleſs* to the *other*, as Faith, Hope, &c.

It is enquired here, How the Foundations are diſpoſed of, if they were all collateral, and of an equal Extent and Breadth, and ſo the Wall would have twelve diſtinct Foundations ſupporting it? Or if by the twelve Foundations we are to mean the *Spaces* of the Wall betwixt the Gates, and ſo every Space have a different Foundation? Or if theſe Foundations were each of them above another, and then there would be twelve *Strata*, or Layers, one above another, before we come to the whole Bulk of the Wall, which we find, *v.* 18. to be of *Jaſper*: Or, laſtly, If the twelve Foundations be only to be meant of the twelve precious Stones mentioned, *v.* 19, and 20. laid *chequer-ways*, or after ſome other Manner, for none is mentioned here? We ſhould not bear too hard upon an *Emblem*, eſpecially that the Text is not expreſs, but may ſafely let this paſs in the ſame Senſe we find it, *v.* 19. where it is ſaid, *The Foundations of the Wall were garniſhed with all Manner of precious Stones.* The indiſputable Senſe of all is this, the Fortifications of this City will be regular, beautiful and impregnable.

That the Names of the *Tribes* of *Iſrael* are on the *Gates*, and the Names of *Chriſt's Apoſtles* on the *Foundations*, is to aſſure us the *Jews* will then in a very general Manner fall in with the *Doctrine* of the *Apoſtles*: And ſo, as the *Old* Teſtament-Diſpenſation will be ſwallowed up of the *New*, being exactly accompliſhed therein, the *Jews* will build the Hopes of their Salvation upon the *Faith* contain'd in the *Writings* of the *Apoſtles*, and that they will do it in the moſt open and expreſs Manner: And thus *Jews* and *Gentiles* will coaleſce in *one Church*, and be as *one Stick* in the Hand of the *Lord*. All this ſeems to carry the Matter quite off from the glorified State of the Church in Heaven.

15 And he that talked with me had a golden Reed to meaſure the City, and the Gates thereof, and the Walls thereof.

16 And the City lieth Four-ſquare, and the Length is as large as the Breadth: And he meaſured the City with a Reed Twelve thouſand Furlongs; the Length, and the Breadth and the Height of it are equal.

17 And he meaſured the Wall thereof, an Hundred and forty and four Cubits, according to the Meaſure of a Man, that is, of the Angel.

Here we have the Introduction, *v.* 15. (2.) The Dimenſions of the City, *v.* 16. (3.) The Dimenſions of the Wall, *v.* 14.

I. The Introduction, where, 1. The Meaſurer. 2. His Tool. 3. The Object.

1. The Meaſurer, *The Angel that talked with me*; The ſame we heard of, *v.* 9. This has a great Affinity with *Ezekiel*'s Viſion, *Ezek.* xl. 3. where the *Angel* is called *a Man whoſe Appearance was like the Appearance of Braſs.* There are indeed many take it to be *Jeſus Chriſt*, becauſe his Feet is ſaid, *Rev.* i. 15. to be *like fine Braſs.* In general, it declares a glorious Appearance, whether the Perſon be created or uncreated. *Chap.* xi. *John* was ordered to meaſure the *Temple* and the *Altar*: Here the *Angel*, no doubt at the Command of God, takes the Task in Hand. *John* makes no Report of the Dimenſions of what he had meaſured, as here he does of what the *Angel* meaſured; becauſe the State of the Church was then *mean*, and ſhe *propheſied in Sackcloth*, and ſo Believers made but a little Flock: But here the *Condition* of the Church will be very *great*, and therefore the Work would ſurpaſs the *Apoſtle*'s Capacity; Beſides, the *Angel* might meaſure it, that *John* might be the more attentive, to communicate to the Church what he ſaw. This is the Reaſon given by the Angel to *Ezekiel*, v. 4. *Son of Man, behold with thine Eyes, and hear with thine Ears, and ſet thy Heart upon all that I ſhall ſhew thee: For to the Intent that I might ſhew them unto thee, art thou brought hither. Declare all that thou ſeeſt unto the Houſe of* Iſrael.

2. His *meaſuring Tool*, or Inſtrument, *A golden Reed to meaſure.* There are ſome Difficulties about the *Reed*, which we conſidered on *Chap.* xi. 1. for it is the ſame *Word* in both: Only here it is deſigned a *golden Reed*; Before, it is ſimply called, *a Reed like a Rod.* Some think it was only *gilt* with Gold, or *tipped* with that Metal at both Ends, elſe it could not be called a *Reed*, but might be named a Rod or Rule of Gold. Yet this is not the Word uſed *Chap.* xvii. 4. where the Woman is ſaid to be *decked or gilded with Gold*: But it is the ſame Word, and the ſame Conſtruction uſed in many Parts of this Prophecy, as when we read of *Golden Candleſticks, Golden Crowns, Golden Cups*, &c. where none ſay theſe were only *gilded*, but think the *Matter* was pure Gold: And ſo we are to take it here. As for the Difficulty ariſing from the

the Word *Reed*, it may be eaſily got over, if we allow it in Shape to be like a *meaſuring Reed*, for that was the Uſe of it.

'Tis enquired here, *What the Length of this Rod is?* Nor do I ſee any Thing in the Text will help us out with it, only that therewith they could meaſure both Cubits and Furlongs. Some think it the ſame with the meaſuring Reed mentioned in *Ezekiel*, Chap. xl. 5. *Six Cubits long and an Hand-breadth.* Yet even here the Learned are not agreed as to the Length of a *Cubit*, tho' there be little Debate as to the Dimenſion of an *Hand-breadth*, commonly reckon'd four Inches: But this does not tell us what a *Cubit* is, only it is contended it was the next ordinary ſhort Meaſure above an Hand-breadth: Yet we know that a *long Rod* may have marked the *ſhorteſt* Meaſures, tho' it be long enough itſelf; nor indeed are we further concern'd about this now, till we come to the Dimenſions of the Walls and City.

That which moſt concerns us, is to know what we are to underſtand by this *meaſuring Reed.* A great many, who underſtand the whole *Context* of *Heaven*, neglect this altogether; and theſe who ſay any Thing of it, make it to ſignify the Will of God. Thus all Parties are agreed in the general, for no doubt all is done in Heaven according to the Will of God: We are ſure their ordinary Performances are the Standard all on Earth are to copy after. But then from the Context it would appear we are under a Neceſſity of fetching this Rule from the *Apoſtles Doctrine*, of which we read in the preceeding Verſe: And this mars all their Deſign; for their Writings will have no *Authority* in Heaven, when the Church is *triumphant*, becauſe all their Doctrines are calculate for the Church of God upon Earth. In Heaven all the *Saints*, even the *Apoſtles* themſelves, will be immediately ſubject to the Will of God, without any intermediate Interpreters betwixt *the Father of Lights* and *them.* Tho' I own there will be none of the Commands of God in Heaven inconſiſtent with theſe *Rules* which he gave on Earth by his *Prophets* and *Apoſtles*, yet it is certain a great many of theſe Ordinances of God, we are now tied to upon Pain of Damnation, will have no Place in Heaven: And therefore I think we ſhould take it for the revealed Will of God in his Word, as we are obliged to do elſewhere, *Gal.* vi. 16. *As many as walk according to this Rule.* Again, *Rom.* xii. 13. *God hath dealt to every Man the Meaſure of Faith.* Theſe, and other Expreſſions to the ſame Purpoſe, declare, however great the Church will be at that Time, yet ſhe will be confin'd and limited; which ſeems not to ſpeak of Heaven.

3. The Object, or what is to be meaſured, in *three.* (1.) The *City* in general, *i. e.* the whole Bulk and Extent thereof: We explain'd *City* above, *Chap.* xx. 9. ſo that the whole Conſtitution will be exactly according to the Will of God, *All Things in the Houſe of the God of Heaven, will be according to the Mind of the God of Heaven.* (2.) The *Gates* thereof: This was alſo explain'd, *v.* 12. of this Chapter. The Entrances into that City will be no broader or wider than God has made them: The Terms of *Communion* are eſtabliſhed in the Scriptures, and to them will the laſt Appeal in the Church be. It is to be noticed, when we get the Report of the *City* in its Bulk, and the Walls in their Breadth and Height, *&c.* we have have none of the *Gates*; This is paſt over in profound Silence. That which I conceive to be the Reaſon why they are dropt, is, becauſe there will be no new Ways to God, but what all the Saints in all Conditions and Ages have paſt through. But as for the other two, *viz.* the *City* itſelf, it will be vaſtly more glorious and extenſive than ever it was before; and the Fortifications thereof will be much more ſtrong. (3.) The Walls thereof, by which I ſhewed we are to mean the Safety and Protection God gives his Church, which will be every Way ſufficient.

II. The Dimenſions of the City, with an Account of its Figure, *v.* 16. There is no ſmall Debate amongſt the Learned about this; Nor will I promiſe to decide the Matter: However, I ſhall take another Method than many have done before me, in order to come at its Senſe, and follow my wonted Way of taking the Light of Scripture alongſt with me. Here I ſhall notice, 1. The Figure of this City. 2. Its Dimenſions. 3. Its Symmetry and Proportion.

1. The *Figure* of this City, *The City lieth Four-ſquare, and the Length is as large as the Breadth.* This Expreſſion is very plain in itſelf, and ſays, *all its Sides are equal with Rectangles.* This does not point at the Height; for a Thing may be equal in its four *Sides*, tho' the *Altitude* be different, as the Altar of Burnt-offerings is, *Exod.* xxvii. 1. *Five Cubits in Length, and Five in Breadth*; Yet it was but *three Cubits high.* We find alſo *Ezekiel*'s City Four-ſquare, *Ezek.* xlviii. 16. *Four thouſand and five hundred Meaſures* on all its four Sides; and ſeveral other ſquare Figures, as the *Pillars*, Chap. xli. 21. the *Sanctuary*, Chap. xlii. 20. the *Prieſts Appartments*, Chap. xliii. 16. the *Altar*, and the *Ground of the Sanctuary*, Chap. xlv. 2. It is owned by all to be the moſt perfect Figure: So ἀνὴρ τετράγωνος, by the *Greeks*, was the Character of an up-

right and perfect Man, whether apply'd *phyſically* or *morally*: The ſame among the *Latines*, *Homo quadratus*, which is what we in our Language call a *ſquare Man*. It is alſo obſerved, that this is the moſt ſtable and fixed Figure; the contrary is found in all globular or round Figures: And *Selden* tells us, All regular Cities and Fortifications were of this *Make*, eſpecially if they were for Defence; and ſo they were equally impregnable on all Quarters. When *Herodotus* would deſcribe a ſtrong Hold, he makes it in Form of a *Fort-royal* or *Quadrangle*. This alſo affords another Argument why this *City* is not to be meant of *Heaven*, for there is nothing to be feared there; but this is the Repreſention of a State of the Church wherein ſhe may not be ſo ſecure, and therefore God provides for her Safety. This Figure alſo gives Acceſs to diſpoſe of the City-Streets in the moſt orderly Manner, which could not hold in any other Figure.

2. The Dimenſions of this City, *He meaſured the City with a Reed, Twelve thouſand Furlongs*. As to the Meaſure of *Furlongs*, here mentioned, we had it before, *Chap.* xiv. 20. where I ſhewed it to be the eighth Part of our common Mile. It was a *Roman* Meaſure, and therefore we read not of it in the Old Teſtament. Some tell us, Tho' it be *Stadium* in the *Latine*, it is much the ſame in the *Greek*, and that the *Latines* borrowed it from the *Greeks*. The Matter is much the ſame, provided we could come to the true Notion of its Length, wherein I find the Learned differ very much: For *Hamond*, and ſome others, make it to contain Three hundred Cubits, and the Cubit to be no more than a Foot of Meaſure, ſo that ſixteen *Furlongs* will go to an ordinary Mile: Whereas others, and by far the manyeſt, make a *Furlong* to conſiſt of One hundred and twenty five *geometrical* Paces, at five Foot in the Pace, and thus eight Furlongs make a Mile: This is double in Length to the other, and has Six hundred and twenty five Foot in it. The ingenious Mr. *Potter*, who travelled much in this dry Study, tells us, That *Stadium* is originally a *Greek* Word; and that they had two Sorts of *Furlongs*, one called *Olympick*, conſiſting of Six hundred Foot of Meaſure; the other *Pythian*, conſiſting of Five hundred; and that the *Romans*, who had borrowed many Things from the *Greeks*, did alſo adopt this: But he owns the Meaſure to be uncertain, and therefore chooſes to go in with that Senſe we gave of it, *i. e.* that it is about the eighth Part of an *Italian* Mile, which he hath from *Pliny*, whom we may allow to be acquainted well with the Menſurations of the Ways in his own Place; and therefore we may allow our Text to ſpeak in the moſt common Dialect: At this Rate, Twelve thouſand *Furlongs* make juſt Fifteen hundred Miles, which indeed is a literal Allowance to a *City*. Tho' ſome challenge our Copy in the Original, and, with *Montanus*, follow the *Complutenſe* Edition, and read it Twelve times twelve thouſand *Furlongs*, which, if reduced to Miles, will make Eighteen thouſand Miles, or One hundred and forty four thouſand Furlongs. This they contend ſhould take Place, becauſe we have here a plain Reſpect to the State of the Church mentioned, *Chap.* vii. where the Sealed are an Hundred and forty four thouſand: And here, allowing a Furlong for a Perſon, the Number is equal, and ſhews the great Increaſe of the Church will be at the laſt, from what it was then; and the greater Agreement betwixt theſe and the Hundred and forty four Cubits in the Wall. Beſides, it comes nearer to the great Prophecy, *Chap.* xi. 15. *The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdom of our Lord and his Chriſt*. For the habitable Earth is reckoned by *Mathematicians* to be about Twenty one thouſand and ſixty Miles in Circuit; and ſo, according to this, *ſix* Parts of *ſeven* in the World will be Chriſtian. It muſt be owned this is fairly accounted for, but the Credit of that Edition is much queſtioned; however that is not our Province.

Others again, that adhere to our *Reading*, which all own to be moſt common and ordinary, are not agreed how theſe Twelve thouſand Furlongs ſhould be diſpoſed of. Some ſay, The *City* is ſo much *ſquare*, and then the Compaſs of it will amount to Six thouſand Miles. And if it ſhould hold what ſome affirm, that two Thirds of the *Terraqueous Glob* are *Sea*, *Rivers*, *Lakes*, &c. this will not be found to differ much from the former Opinion, ſuppoſing that to comprehend both *Sea* and *dry Land*, and this only to ſignify the *dry Land*; for if Twelve thouſand be added to Six thouſand, the Sum is Eighteen thouſand; this makes both the Readings ſignify the ſame Thing. As for the *Objection* moved againſt this, *viz.* It was not poſſible for *John*'s Eye to follow the *Angel* when he meaſured, if we allow the leaſt of theſe Dimenſions to take Place. I reckon this has little Weight, for this was a Viſion containing only a *Scheme* or *Map* of that *New Jeruſalem*, which might be compriſed in narrow Limits; as we ſee Satan, in *a Moment of Time, ſhewed unto Chriſt all the Kingdoms of the World*, Luke iv. 5. which all underſtand to be an Emblem: And we know, that, by the Art of Man, the whole known habitable World, and the Seas, can be diſcovered in an ordinary Sheet of Paper; and ſo accurately, that the Knowing can meaſure Diſtances. Now, if the *Devil* and *Men* be capable of this ſhort and eaſy Way of diſplaying Things, may we not allow

allow much more to the *Spirit of God*? Yet it muſt be owned there lies an heavier Objection againſt both theſe Opinions than this, *viz.* The Text plainly ſpeaks of a ſquare Meaſuring, which will amount to no more but Fifteen hundred Miles every Way, and to be ſure this will not comprehend the habitable Part of the World; and as little will the greater Meaſure, according to the *Complutenſe Edition*, extend to the whole *Terraqueous Glob*: So that we muſt allow this to be one of theſe Paſſages of this *myſterous* Prophecy, not underſtood by any of theſe learned Enquirers as yet.

Others again tell us, This Twelve thouſand *Furlongs* is the Meaſure of the whole Circuit, and ſo the City is but Three thouſand *Furlongs* ſquare, or Three hundred and ſeventy Miles in Breadth and Length. This alſo makes a prodigious City; and if we compare it with the City of *Babylon*, which we ſhewed was only ſixty Miles in Circuit, it will be near ſeven Times as big as it: Yet One would think, that, conſidering the Words, Twelve thouſand Furlongs is the Meaſure of the Breadth as well as of the Length.

Laſtly, Mr. *Potter*, who has ſweat hard, extracting the ſquare Roots out of all the Numbers of this Prophecy, whereby he flattered himſelf and the World, he had got the Knack of ſolving all the Difficulties therein, is many a Time puzzled how to diſpoſe of his *Fractions*, and in no Place more than here. He ſays, We have not the *Dimenſions* of the City, either of its *Circuit lineally*, or of any of its *Sides*, or yet as to its *Breadth* or *Length*, or yet as to its *Superfice*, but the *ſolid Meaſure* comprehending the *whole City*; and at length, from the Twelve thouſand *Furlongs*, extracts the *ſquare Root*; and concludes the *Circuit* of this City is ſomething more than Ninety one *Furlongs*, but leſs than Ninety two, and this reduced to Miles, is Eleven and near an Half, and ſo it will not be full three Miles ſquare. So little a Thing does he make of that *great City*, which we are ſure will at once be the Delight of God, and Miſtreſs of the *World*, by which he makes it leſs than many *Capital Cities* in particular Kingdoms, and theſe none of the greateſt; and which will not bear the Proportion to *Old Babylon*, of *One* to *Twenty*. Now, what ſhould make the Learned dote upon this, I ſee not, except it be its *Novelty*, and eſpecially ſuch as take this City for an Emblem of Heaven: I ſtrange they ſhould bear to have its Dimenſions ſo ſtraitned and confined. Beſides, all this will not make us one Jot wiſer as to the Knowledge of the *Prophecy*: It can give no Light at all, nor is there any Reaſon in Scripture to give the leaſt Countenance thereto. 'Tis true, they plead it will make this City much of a Bulk with that in *Ezekiel*; but it is owned by all, that the Dimenſions of that Prophet's *City* are not as yet underſtood, becauſe there are a great many Meaſurings of particular Plots, beſides the *City* and its large Suburbs, of which we have no Account here: And yet *Ezekiel*'s City, *Chap.* xlviii. 30. will be found larger in the Square than the *New Jeruſalem*; for, allowing Four thouſand five hundred Meaſures, at ten Foot the Meaſure, it will be about nine or ten Miles in the Square. Beſides this, we find meaſured an holy Portion of Ground, *Chap.* xlv. 1. Twenty five thouſand Meaſures in Length, and Ten thouſand in Breadth, which could be no Part of the City; And a great many other *Commenſurations*, for the *Prince*, the *Prieſts*, &c. which, were they all accurately collected and added, would bring the Extent of it far beyond what Mr. *Potter* would be at: Yea, I doubt not but it might very much agree with the Dimenſions in our Text, according to the largeſt Extent. But I own I ſee no Certainty to determine ought in this Place.

3. The Symmetry and Proportion of this City, *The Length, and the Breadth, and the Height of it are equal.* It muſt be owned, were this to be taken literally, there would be much Difficulty in the Words, for then the City would be Fifteen hundred Miles high, and yet the Walls in the next Verſe are not proportionable; but that we are to take it figuratively, the Strait will be the leſs. It wants only one Dimenſion to bring it to a true *cubical* Figure, conſiſting of *ſix Sides*, all equal; for we have no Account of its *Baſe*, as of its *four Sides* and *Superfice*, tho' it is reaſonable to think the *Baſe* would correſpond to the *Superfice*, elſe we muſt allow it to be of greater Extent in the *Top* than *Bottom*. Some give the Reaſon why we have no Account of the *Baſe*, becauſe the *Apoſtle* had ſpoke of the *Foundation* of this City, *v.* 14. and again reſumes it, *v.* 19. and having alſo ſpoke of its *Circuit* and *Square*, it remained only that he ſhould ſpeake of its *Altitude*, which he makes *equal* to its *Breadth* and *Length*, i. e. all its *Dimenſions* are equal. It is an idle Fancy of *Grotius*, *That as the Length and Breadth are equal*, i. e. *a true Quadrangle, ſo the Wall will be equally high*, i. e. no Part of it lower than another: For here the Apoſtle is not comparing one Part of the Wall with another, or one Part of the City with another, but he is meaſuring the *Height* of the City, by its *Length* and *Breadth*. 'Tis yet as ſenſleſs in them, who would have this City to ſtand upon an exceeding high Mountain, and ſo meaſuring from the *Baſe* of the *Mountain*, to the *Pinacles* of its *Towers*, the *Altitude* would correſpond

ſpond to either its *Longitude* or *Latitude*; for we muſt otherwiſe allow the Mountain to exceed One thouſand one hundred and ninety eight *Furlongs*, becauſe the Wall is but One hundred and forty four Cubits. Now, it is not poſſible to find a Mountain near One hundred and fifty Miles in *Height*; ſo that of Neceſſity we are driven from that Way of thinking. It is a better Thought of theſe, who mean *Faith* as the Length, *Love* as the Breadth, and *Hope* as the Height; and we are ſure theſe three are Requiſites in every particular Stone in this Building: But here the Speech is not of particular Parts, but of the Bulk, and that by the other two *Dimenſions* we are under ſome Neceſſity to underſtand the Extent of the *Goſpel-Kingdom* in the habitable World; ſo the *Height* muſt point out its Eminence, and Excellency in the Sight of both God and Man, to be equal to the other two, *i. e.* the City will be as honourable as large. This is a prophetick Phraſe, *Ezek.* xiv. 11. *She appeared in her Height, with the Multitude of her Branches*, i. e. As a tall Tree overtopes all the Trees of the Wood, and bears ſway over them, being as high as great, ſo ſhall the Kingdom of Chriſt be at that Day. Thus alſo the *Amorite* is compared to the *Cedar* for Height, *Amos* ii. 9. Many Cities have been very broad and wide, whoſe Reputation has been low enough; but it will not be ſo with this *new Jeruſalem*.

III. We have the Dimenſions of the Wall, *v.* 17. Where, 1. The Meaſure of the Wall. 2. The Illuſtration of this Meaſure.

1. The *Dimenſions* of the Wall, *He meaſured the Wall, an hundred forty and four Cubits.* There are ſeveral Sorts of *Cubits* mentioned by the Ancients: For tho' we read of it before the Deluge in framing the Ark, *Gen.* vi. 16. yet does not that teach us what its true Length was. Some diſtinguiſh Cubits among the People of God, in the *Legal*, which, they ſay, was five Foot long, and ſo equal to what we call a *Pace*; the *Common*, which yet obtains about the ſame Senſe, *i. e.* twenty Inch long, or, as ſome ſay, more than a Foot and a Half; and the *Royal*, which, *Herodotus* ſays, exceeds the common three Inches, and ſo is about two Foot in Length: *Suidas* mentions a *Cubit* ſome *Inches* above four Foot. Others tell of a *Royal Cubit* among the *Greeks*, ten Foot long. *Auguſtine* mentions a Cubit, which contains *ſix common Cubits*. There is another Diſtinction of *Cubit*, very ancient: The *Anatomiſts* ſay, The Cubit is meaſured by that Bone of the Arm from the *Elbow* to the *Wreſt*, which, in proportionable People, is the ſixth Part of their Height; ſo that, in a Man of an ordinary Height, it cannot exceed twelve *Inches*. The *Mathematicians*, again, tell us, The Cubit is a Foot and an Half, or eighteen Inches. Theſe who eſpouſe the firſt of theſe two Opinions, think they have Ground from this Text, where it is called *the Meaſure of a Man*: But theſe who adopt the laſt Thought, ſay, From the Wreſt, to the Point of the Fingers, is ſix *Inches*, which they contend to be the true Senſe. I confeſs it is hard to determine which of theſe Senſes ſhould take Place here: Or, if we take it for the moſt common Cubit, a Foot and Half, we will not be thereby helped out with the Myſtery, more than by any of the reſt.

Yet here it is not ſaid how this *Meaſure* was applied to the *Wall*, and we are ſure it is not to be underſtood of the Circuit, otherwiſe the Wall could not ſurround the City, which is Twelve thouſand Furlongs. Mr. *Potter* tells us, We are again to fiſh for the ſquare Root, which he finds *tight* with our Fractions, to be twelve; for twelve Times twelve is preciſely One hundred and forty four: But then he is obliged to drop his ſolid Meaſure, which cannot reach further than eighteen Foot ſquare of the Wall, and therefore tells us, The Wall was twelve *Cubits* thick, and as much high, *i. e.* eighteen Foot every Way: But then, the *new Jeruſalem*, which in every other Reſpect is greater than *old Babylon*, will be far inferior to her in her Fortifications, whoſe Wall was Fifty *Cubits* thick, and much higher, by the loweſt Account: And therefore in all Reaſon we are ſo to underſtand it, as this *new Jeruſalem* have the Advantage of *Babylon* in her Wall, as well as in other Things; which to be ſure is true, ſince we know the *Lord will be a Wall of Fire about her*, and *as the Mountains are about* Jeruſalem, &c.

2. The Illuſtration of this Meaſure, *according to the Meaſure of a Man, that is, of the Angel.* Some think this gives Ground for that Diſtinction of *Cubit* into *ſacred* and *common*, which laſt, they ſay, was *the Meaſure of Man*, i. e. about ſix Foot; and that this determines the Length of *golden Reed*: But, be the Length of that *Reed* what it will, it was no Inſtrument of Man's Invention. That which I take to be the Senſe of it is, The Apoſtle, in the Viſion, had as clear and diſtinct a View of what the *Angel* did, as if a Man had done it; and ſo it aſſerts the Truth of what was advanced, and to teach us that ſomething is further wrapt up in the Words, than what they barely ſignify. Thus, while the Apoſtle is ſpeaking of the deep Things of God, he does it in Expreſſions familiar among Men; yet they have a ſpiritual Senſe: As, when he tells the *Romans*,

mans, Rom. vi. 16. *They were made free from Sin, and became the Servants of Righteouſneſs*; He adds, *I ſpeak after the Manner of Men.* And while he accounts for his Bickerings with the beaſtly Men at *Epheſus*, he ſays, 1 *Cor.* xv. 32. *After the Manner of Men, I have fought with Beaſts*: By this then he would lead to the ſpiritual Contemplation of what is expreſſed after the ordinary Phraſeology of Men.

18 And the Building of the Wall of it was of Jaſper, and the City was pure Gold, like unto clear Glaſs.

19 And the Foundations of the Wall of the City were garniſhed with all Manner of precious Stones. The firſt Foundation was Jaſper, the ſecond a Sapphire, the third a Chalcedony, the fourth an Emerald.

20 The fifth Sardonix, the ſixth Sardius, the ſeventh Chryſolite, the eighth Beryl, the ninth a Topaz, the tenth a Chryſopraſus, the eleventh a Jacinct, the twelfth an Amethyſt.

21 And the twelve Gates were twelve Pearls, every ſeveral Gate was of one Pearl, and the Street of the City was pure Gold, as it were tranſparent Glaſs.

Here we have the Materials of this City to view in theſe remarkable Steps, 1. The Matter of the Wall. 2. Of the whole City, *v.* 18. 3. Of the Foundations of the Wall, *v.* 19, and 20. 4. Of the Gates. 5. Of the Streets, *v.* 21.

I. The *Matter* of the Wall, *The Building of the Wall was of Jaſper.* The Wall of *Babylon* was but of Brick, and ſo of a mouldring Nature; but the Wall of the *new Jeruſalem* is of precious Stone, even of *Jaſper*, of which we ſpoke on *v.* 11. I only add further, this Stone is ſaid to be one of the moſt ſolid and durable Stones, ſo that it cannot be broken with a Hammer; yea, it is thought to vie with the *Adamant* in Hardneſs. It is ſaid, *the Building* was of this. The Word ἐνδομήσεις occurs very ſeldom in Scripture, and therefore the Learned diſpute its Signification: Some tell us, It ſignifies theſe packing Stones are put in the Heart of a Wall, betwixt the two Faces, and by which they are bound to one another; ſo that the Solidity of the Wall depends upon them. Others tell us, The Word is uſed to expreſs theſe regular Fortifications, or Breaſt-works, whereby Cities are ſecured from the Violence of the proud Waves of the Sea, for which they chooſe both the ſmootheſt and hardeſt of Stones, becauſe leaſt in Hazard to be either broke or looſed by the Rage of a Storm. And by this, ſome would mean theſe Perſons God raiſeth up to ſtand for the Truth, and will not be put to either Shame or Silence in this great and glorious Conteſt. Others think, the Power of God is thereby pointed at. Laſtly, By this, ſome underſtand what in *Architecture* is called the *Binding*, or Band-ſtones, which binds the ſeveral Pieces of the Wall together; and theſe are, eſpecially in great Buildings, both long and ſtrong. However, we find this a very notable Part of the Building, and is *thrice* mentioned about this City, and, from the Nature of the Stone, ſeems no leſs for Beauty than Strength.

II. The *Matter* and *Appearance* of the City, *the City was pure Gold, like unto clear Glaſs.* The *Matter* is *pure, purged* or *refined Gold*: Of *Gold* we had Occaſion to ſpeak, on *Chap.* iii. 18. and other Places; here it ſeems to be of a Piece with what was then ſaid, and teaches us there will be no Lumber of the Inventions of Men, no falſe Paint or Waſh, but all Things in the Church done and obſerved according to the *Will of God.* As for the Appearance, *like unto clear Glaſs*; Some think this is ſaid of the *Gold*, that the Gold was like the Glaſs: But this is a Miſtake; for *Like* is in the ſame *Caſe* and *Gender* with *City*, and therefore muſt be underſtood of the City. It has the *Purity* and Value of *Gold*, and the *Brightneſs* and Tranſparency of *Glaſs*. It has all that is good in the Appearance of *Glaſs*, Clearneſs and Cleanneſs, but free of its Britleneſs. This declares the *Honeſty* and *Integrity* of that Period of the Church, there will then be no Monſter of a Hypocrite; all will have a goodly Appearance, but nothing within, which is not perfectly agreeable thereto: Theſe who look unto their Neighbour's outward Behaviour, will thereby ſee into his Heart.

III. The Matter of the Foundations of the Wall, *v.* 19, and 20. Where, 1. A general Account of theſe Foundations. 2. A particular Detail of their Materials.

In general it is ſaid, *The Foundations of the Wall of the City were garniſhed with all Manner of precious Stones.* The Wall is but one, but the Foundations are numbred Twelve. There would be too much *Curioſity*, and too little Evidence, to ſtate an En-

quiry into the Order and Diſpoſition of the Foundations, if by each of them we are to underſtand the Interſtice betwixt two Gates, becauſe the Gates divide the Wall into *twelve Parts*, and ſo the *twelve Apoſtles* concur to fence the City, yet ſo as every One ſhould have his own proper and equal Share. This will not do; for theſe *great Men* wrought to others Hands, and each of them had their Share in the Whole, and each in every Part: Nor will it ground any Diſtinction, that ſome of the Apoſtles had the Circumciſion committed to them, and the Uncircumciſion was the Province of others; for we find *Peter* imployed about the *Gentiles*, and the Apoſtle *Paul* very much concerned about the *Jews*.

Others again flee to the ſeveral *Attainments* of the *Apoſtles*, and think the particular Graces beſtowed upon them *perſonally*, is the Senſe of this: So they advance the *Courage* and *Zeal* of *Peter*, the *Wiſdom* and *Learning* of *Paul*, the *Gravity* and *Authority* of *James*, &c. are to be the Senſe of theſe precious Stones. It cannot be refuſed but the different Graces and Gifts of Miniſters are a notable Embelliſhment to the Church of Chriſt; and that even the great Head of the Church is thereby glorified, becauſe he is the Author of them, and they are imployed to his Glory: And therefore I would not lightly reject this. And ſo, if there be Room for this in the Interpretation, it is a Prophecy or Promiſe, that both Miniſters and private Chriſtians will be beautified and adorned for the Maſter's Satisfaction.

Others ſtrain to bring in the ſeveral Doctrines preached by the *Apoſtles*, as *Juſtification* by *Paul*, *Sanctification* by *Peter*, *Patience* by *James*, &c. are to be the Signification of theſe Stones ſo precious. But, ſuppoſing *each* of the *Apoſtles* had a particular Portion of the *Faith* to propagate, what would they make of that, ſeeing we have no authentick Document of a good Part of the *Apoſtles* left under their Hands, to help us out with this; for that of Writing, was but the Part or Work of ſome of them? As for the *Apocryphal Goſpels* and *Epiſtles* that are aſcribed to others, they are juſtly condemned as ſpurious: Beſides, ſhould we yield all this, it is falſe that is ſuppoſed, that each of the *Apoſtles* had a *particular Part* of the Doctrine of Chriſtianity committed to them; for all of them inculcate the whole Fundamentals of Religion, ſome of them more ſuccinctly, and others at greater Length. I further remark, ſome who contend for this Senſe, batter hard their own general Notion, *viz.* That all this concerns a State of *Glory*; for a great many of theſe Doctrines will be *uſeleſs* in Heaven, and do only concern the State of the Church upon Earth: Neither would I quite exclude this. But, before we be more *Dogmatick*, I would notice theſe Things in the Words;

(1.) The Speech is here about the *Foundations*; which is the *loweſt* and *ſtrongeſt* Part of the Building, upon the Stability whereof depends the Security and Strength of the whole Edifice. We read this in the plural Number, to aſſure us more Things than one are neceſſary to ground a Church, yet all theſe are found in One, *Jeſus Chriſt*. We ought to notice well the Ground-Work of our Religion, if a *precious Rock*, or *light Sand*.

(2.) The Matter of the Foundations is *precious Stones*. They are called *Stones*, for their Firmneſs and Solidity; they are deſigned *precious*, to ſhew their Value and Excellency of Beauty. Old *Babylon* was built with Brick, the new *Jeruſalem* with precious Stones. We find in Scripture the Excellency of a Conſtitution is deſigned from its Ground-Work, or Fences, and the Worth of theſe Materials they are made of: Sometimes indeed all this is but imaginary, as in the Caſe of *Tyre*, Ezek. xxviii. 13. *Every precious Stone was thy Covering* [Defence] *the Sardius, Topaz, the Diamond, the Beryl*, &c. She believed herſelf ſecure under the beſt Fortifications, *viz.* theſe precious Stones. When the Lord is foretelling the After-ſtate of his Church, he gives it in ſuch Terms, Iſa. liv. 11, 12. *Behold, I will lay thy Stones with fair Colours, and thy Foundations with Sapphires; I will make thy Windows of Agats, and thy Gates of Carbuncles, and all thy Borders of pleaſant Stones.* Sometimes we have all theſe precious Stones compriſed in one, *Iſa.* xxviii. 16. *Behold, I lay in Zion for a Foundation, a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious Corner-ſtone, a ſure Foundation.* From all this 'tis evident, the *Foundations* of this *City* are nothing elſe but what is in and from Chriſt, called *One*, becauſe he is the only Ground-wall of his Church; and *many*, as here, becauſe of the manifold Graces he has, and diſpenſeth, which are all precious.

(3.) The Foundations had *all Manner* of precious Stones. Some think this is wrong turned, becauſe a great many mo precious Stones can be numbred than *Twelve*; they find *two and twenty* mentioned in *Scripture* of the moſt valuable and precious, and *two* others that are reckoned by *Naturaliſts* to vie with ſome of theſe; ſo that the Number is twice twelve: And therefore they would have the Verſion to be, *The Foundations were all garniſhed with precious Stone.* But this will not do; for, let us go as near the Original as we can, the Reading will be, *The Foundations of the Wall of the City were gar-*

garniſhed with all precious Stone; which ſays, If all the precious Stones in the World were not in it, yet as many as were neceſſary to conſtitute the whole Foundation. We hear *Twelve Stones* of great Value were appointed for the *Breaſt-plate* of the *high Prieſt*, Exod. xxviii. 20. but only *eight* of them correſpond to theſe: Nor are they in the ſame Order; which aſſures us, we are not, from the Nature and Order of theſe Stones, to apply them to the *Twelve Apoſtles*, eſpecially that we find not the Apoſtles always enumerate after the ſame Order, *Mat.* x. 3. *Mark* iii. 16. *Luke* vi. 14. and therefore it would be a vain Labour to offer a Deſcription of the ſeveral Apoſtles *hierogliphically*, from theſe precious Stones, and the Order in which they are ranged. Beſides, the Graces and Doctrines of all the Apoſtles may be well preſum'd to partake of the Nature of all theſe precious Stones.

(4.) It is ſaid, The Foundations were *garniſhed* with theſe precious Stones. This Word is rendred *adorned*, 1 Tim. ii. 9. *Let Women adorn themſelves with modeſt Apparel*; which ſeems to be the proper Signification of the Word: And ſo theſe Waſhes, *&c.* Women in the Eaſt were in Uſe of, are called by all *Coſmeticks*, from this Word in the Text. It is true, we find it uſed in another Senſe, and that neceſſarily; as *to trim*, Mat. xxv. 7. *The Virgins aroſe and trimmed their Lamps*, i. e. *dreſſed* or prepared them: Theſe Senſes do not differ much; for in both of theſe Texts, and in ſeveral others, it ſignifies to beautify with Diligence and Pains; ſo all theſe Stones were poliſhed and prepared for the Building, where they are to be placed. Yet ſtill I think there is an Alluſion to the *Temple* built by *Solomon*, which was made of *choice* and *precious* Stones, all *hewed* and *prepared* for the Foundation thereof: *They brought great Stones, coſtly Stones, and hewed Stones to lay the Foundation of the Houſe*; Yet were they not of ſuch a Value as theſe named here.

2. There is a particular Enumeration of theſe *Stones* ſo imployed, in Number *Twelve*. Some think the Explication of theſe Stones properly belongs to *Lapithiſts*, or *Jewelers*; and that therefore they have no Concern with them. I own we have no further Account of them in Scripture, than that they are *precious*, and were uſed as Types of ſpiritual Myſteries, which we have nowhere unriddled, either in the Old or New Teſtament; and therefore we ought to be the more modeſt about them: Yet I apprehend, from *Lapithiſts*, and the *Sons* of *Medicine*, we may meet with ſomething of Uſe in this Part of the Prophecy; tho' I ſhall not paum it as the Mind of the *Spirit of God*, yet I am ſure as little can be ſaid againſt it: Yea, how can we better gueſs at the Deſign of them in *Scripture*, than from the Analyſis of their Nature and Uſe? and this we find to hold in other Pieces of Nature better known, particularly from the *Star*, called *Wormwood*, from its Nature; and that we have theſe Stones mentioned here, ſeems to encourage our Diligence, and not diſcourage Curioſity, if it be not ſinful. And ſo we ſhall view them in Order,

(1.) A *Jaſper*, which is the laſt in Order in the *holy Breaſt-plate*. We had this thrice before: It is a very noted *Gemm*, the beſt from *India*; ſome of them are alſo in *Cyprus*. It is noted to be a moſt powerful Stopper of all Fluxes of Blood, which we find a Touch of Chriſt did to the Woman with the bloody Iſſue, *Mat.* ix. 20. and ſhews the Efficacy of his Grace to reſtrain Sin, and remove the ſinful Root whence it ſprings.

(2.) A *Sapphire*. It is of a moſt tranſparent Blue; the beſt is from *Calecute*, and ſome are in *Bohemia*: It is the fourth in Order in the holy Breaſt-plate. It is moſt valuable and beautiful; it is very hard, and therefore we read of it as a *firm Foundation*, Iſa. liv. 11. It is capable of the fineſt Skin by poliſhing; ſo the beautiful *Nazarites* are compared to the Poliſhing of *Sapphire*: It is fam'd for curing *Rheums*, &c. in the Eyes; and ſo may be an Emblem of the inlightning Grace of the Spirit of God.

(3.) A *Chalcedony*, of which we read nowhere elſe in Scripture. Some take it to be the ſame with the *Carbuncle*; others ſay, It is liker the *Rubie*, but diſtinct from it. All own it is of a moſt ſhining Colour, having the Appearance of Stars within it. It is reckoned a ſpecial *Antidote* againſt *Hoarſeneſs*, and a notable Help for the *Voice*; and therefore it may be an Emblem of *Adoption*, by which they diſcover inwardly the Image of the bright Morning-ſtar, and are bleſſed with an holy Confidence in God through Chriſt, to ſay, *Abba, Father*.

(4.) An *Emerald*. This was the fourth in Order in the high Prieſt's Breaſt-plate: It is found it *Scythia*, *Egypt*, and *Cyprus*; we had it before, *Chap.* iv. 3. It is very precious, and was one of the chief Pieces of fine Merchandice brought to the Market of *Tyre*. It is very hard, and ſaid to be a Specifick againſt the *Vertigo*, and all other ſhaking Diſeaſes; than which we could not deſire a fairer Emblem of confirming Grace.

(5.) A *Sardonix*. The beſt of them are found in *Arabia*, and are of diverſe Colours like the Rain-bow: It is reckoned a notable Cure of *Melancholly*, and creates Cheer-

fulneſs; and ſo an Emblem of that Joy that flows from the Exerciſe of Faith, which is the beſt Cordial to a drooping Soul.

(6.) *Sardius*, found in *Sardinia*, *Epirus*, *Egypt*, and *Bohemia*. It is the firſt mentioned in the *holy Breaſt-plate*; of this we heard, *Chap.* iv. 3. It is commonly called with us, *Cornelian*, and may be an Emblem of the Fear and Dread of God in the Believer's Heart; *I will put my Fear in their Heart, and they ſhall not depart from me.*

(7.) *Chryſolite*. It is fouud in *India*, *Arabia*, and *Ethiopia*. It is of ſuch a bright Colour, that it makes Gold, when compared with it, look like Silver, and ſhines like Fire in the Dark: It is reckoned an *Antidote* againſt Grief, and ſo may be an Emblem of the Conſolations of God's Spirit; *Amidſt the Multitude of my Thoughts, thy Comforts delight my Soul.*

(8.) *Beryl*. It is found in the *Indian Sea*, and is of a golden Colour, but not ſo bright as the *Chryſolite*. *Daniel* tells us, The Perſon he ſaw, *was like the Beryl*, Dan. x. 6. It was the tenth in Order in the Breaſt-plate, and is a great Reſtorative. The Obſervant tell, If it be kept long in the Hand, it will burn it: It may be an Emblem of reſtoring Grace, which, if reſiſted, will be uneaſy to the Perſon; as we ſee in the Caſe of *David*, *whoſe Moiſture was turned into the Drought of Summer*, when he reſiſted the Calls of God to Repentance.

(9.) A *Topaz*. Some *Jewelers* would have this to be the ſame with the *Chryſolite*; but that both are mentioned in this Place, prove them to be diverſe: This is alſo owned by the Sons of *Chymie*, whoſe Province it is no leſs to ſearch into the *Analyſis* of *Gemms*, than the Jeweler into their genuine Nature. This had the ſecond Place in the holy Breaſt-plate; the beſt of them are found in *Arabia*: It is reckoned the brighteſt and largeſt of all Gemms, and cannot be lookt on in the Sun-ſhine, without troubling the Eyes; it ſhines in the Dark, but not ſo fiery as the *Chryſolite*. It is very cold in its Nature; and ſo it is reported, if it be put into a boiling Pot, it will make the Water ſo cold, that one may put his Hand into it without Harm; for this Reaſon it is reckoned a notable Cure of *Madneſs*. This is an Emblem of the glaring Evidence of the Truths of God, and of their Efficacy to ſuppreſs the Riſings of both Paſſion and Luſt.

(10.) A *Chryſopraſus*, is a rare Jewel, and found in *India*; it looks pale in the Day, but of a fiery Colour in the Dark. It is ſaid to be a ſpecial *Antidote* againſt *Fainting*, and will preſently recover any from a Swoon; it is a ſpecial Cordial taken in the ſmalleſt Quantities: It may be an Emblem of the reſtoring Grace of God, which ſtrengthens, and is commended by *David*, Pſal. xxiii.

(11.) A *Jacinct* or *Hiacinth*. It is a tranſparent *Gemm*, of the Colour of Purple, inclining to Red; we heard of it before, *Chap.* ix. 17. The beſt are in *India* and *Ethiopia*; it is clear in fair Weather, and dull and ſad-coloured in foul. It is ſaid to be an *Antidote* againſt the *Plague*, and if any infected with the Peſt touch it, it will preſently loſe its Colour. This is an Emblem of the Chriſtian's Confidence in God, which may be compared to the *Jacinct* in all the above-mentioned Reſpects.

(12.) An *Amethyſt*; it is found in *India*, *Egypt*, *Armenia*, and *Arabia*: It is of a ſhining Colour, and ſparkling. It is very attractive, and ſaid to be a Remedy againſt *Barrenneſs*: This makes it a Figure of true Holineſs in all theſe Reſpects. It was the ninth in Order in the holy Breaſt-plate.

IV. The Matter of the Gates, *v.* 21. together with the Excellency thereof.

1. The Matter of the Gates, *Pearls*. *Grotius* would have this to be Marble of a Pearl-Colour, which ſeems to be an unaccountable Piece of Raſhneſs, eſpecially that we read the Walls where of precious Stones; and to ſuppoſe the Gates would be coarſer than the Walls, would make a great Solyciſm in *Architecture*; by the Rules whereof, all Doors and Entries are to be much finer, both in Workmanſhip and Matter, than the reſt of the Houſe; yet he would have them to be coarſer in both. Beſides, after the ſame Manner, he might detract from all the Parts of this auguſt Structure, by adding, the Matter was only like to theſe Things mentioned; and therefore we muſt allow the Emblem of the Gates to be truly Pearl. We heard of *Pearls* before, *Chap.* xvii. 4. but here we would enquire a little further about this Matter: *Pearl* is a precious Stone found in a Shell-fiſh, and, from the Places where they are caught, have different Names; as ſome are found in our Seas, and are called *Occidental* or *Weſtern*, which are much valued for many Uſes: Others are found in the *Indian* and *Perſian* Ocean, and therefore are deſigned *Oriental*; theſe are by far the moſt valuable. Theſe are reckoned the beſt, which are largeſt, and perforated or bored through; all of them are uſeful in Medicine.

2. The Excellency of that Matter, *Every ſeveral Gate was of one Pearl*; and therefore it is ſaid, *The twelve Gates were twelve Pearls*. *Pearls* were never very large, as *Pliny* tells us; he adds, The greateſt ever he heard of, was Half an Ounce: But *Scaliger* mentions one of the Bigneſs of an Hen-Egg; and ſays, It was of infinite Value. How big then

muſt

muſt they be, when one of them is ſufficient to be a Gate? It is true, we have not the Dimenſions of the Gates reported; only there being ſuch a Symmetry in all the Parts of this City, we are not to doubt but the *Gates* will be proportionable. But what Extent to imagine the *Gates* to be of, I ſee not how we can determine, eſpecially that the Bulk of the Gates is not to be gathered from the Height or Breadth of the Walls, becauſe the Walls are for Defence; And to ſuppoſe the Avenues proportional in Height and Wideneſs to the Height of the Walls, would be to make the City *weak*, where it ſhould be *ſtrongeſt*: And therefore the learned *Mulerius* thinks, this aſſures us the Gates of this City will be very narrow; for, *Mat.* vii. 14. *Strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way that leadeth unto Life.* And, *Mat.* xix. 24. *It is eaſier for a Camel to go through the Eye of a Needle, than for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of God.* I think this Opinion ſhould not be flouted off the Field, as ſome without Reaſon do: I am perſwaded the Terms of Salvation will be no eaſier then, than has been ſince the Beginning of Chriſtianity.

V. The Matter of the Street, *The Street of the City was pure Gold, as it were tranſparent Glaſs.* We heard of *Street* before, *Chap.* xi. 8. It is here alſo in the ſingular Number, and muſt have the ſame Senſe; only, a Reſpect being had to the Cities, it ſignifies a Place of Concourſe for all that have Buſineſs: When applied to the Church, we find *Streets* and *broad Places*, Song iii. 2. taken for the Ordinances, where the People of God gather to the more ſolemn Pieces of his Worſhip. That here they are ſaid to be of *pure Gold*, is no more than what was ſaid of the whole City, *v.* 18. *The City was pure Gold, like unto clear Glaſs.* Here it is called *tranſparent*, ſhewing how bright and clear the *Goſpel-Diſpenſation* will be at that Time; It will not be clouded with Error, nor defiled with humane Inventions: And thus, in a moſt eminent Manner, will God the Father of Spirits be worſhipped in Spirit and Truth. The Senſe of the reſt may be repeated from *v.* 18.

It now remains we conſider theſe diſtinguiſhing Excellencies this new *Jeruſalem* will be bleſſed with, not only above *Babylon*, but the old *Jeruſalem*, from *v.* 22. of this Chapter, to *v.* 6. of the following. They are ſix in Number, and are the chief Arguments uſed by the Learned to prove all this Part of the Prophecy concerns the glorious State of the Saints above; and therefore they incline to take the Throng of theſe Particulars in a very literal Senſe, except when the Phraſes cannot reconcile to the Manſions above, and then they are glad to admit a Figure, to make the Text ſtand plumb to their Hypotheſis. We ſhall therefore conſider them the more particularly, in the Order they are repreſented to us in.

22 And I ſaw no Temple therein: For the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the Temple of it.

This firſt Excellency repreſents, 1. A Privilege. 2. The Reaſon thereof.

I. The Privilege, *I ſaw no Temple therein.* No doubt the *Temple* in the Old *Jeruſalem* was its greateſt Glory, and the Deſtruction of it the greateſt Miſery of the whole Nation, whenever it happened, as it did twice, firſt by the *Chaldeans*, and next by the *Romans*: So that at firſt View this might be reckoned no great Excellency; for the Temple was the Emblem of God's Preſence, and the Place of all ſolemn Worſhip; and therefore *Zion* was called *the City of their Solemnities*, Iſa. xxxiii. 20. From this it is, ſome think we cannot make Senſe of the Words, unleſs they underſtand them of Heaven, where are no Ordinances or Means of Grace, and where *God is All in all*, 1 Cor. xv. 28. But a few Conſiderations will ſet this in a clear Light.

1. It is granted on all Hands, that the *Temple* was but a Type or Figure of ſomething to come; and therefore the Apoſtle calls the *Tabernacle*, and all that pertained to it, *Heb.* ix. 9. *A Figure for the Time then preſent:* So that all can be fetched from that, is, There will be no Type or Shadows; all the *Ritual* Part of Religion, even what was eſtabliſhed by the Command of God, will be perfectly aboliſhed; and much more the Mixture of *Jewiſh* and *Gentile* Rites had been in Uſe in *myſtical Babylon*, and too much indulged by ſome who lay Claim to the Reformation.

2. There is a very popular Notion of *Temple* here, and I own is generally gone in with, That by *Temple* we are to underſtand the Means of Grace, as the *Word*, *Sacraments*, *Prayer*, &c. and this, by a very eaſy *Metonymy*, of the *Continent* for the *Contents*, becauſe a great Part of the *Jewiſh* Worſhip was performed about and in the *Temple*: And hence they conclude, this is to be meant of a State of the Church, wherein there will be no *Means of Grace*; and conſequently this is to be underſtood of the *Triumphant*

Church above, where there is no need of theſe. I own, one is at a Diſadvantage, that attacks an Opinion ſo generally received, tho' it be but very weakly inſtructed: For I am ſatisfied the great Point in Debate is rather begged than proven, *viz.* That the *Temple* is, and at firſt was deſigned only for an Emblem of the Means of Grace. That therefore I may give my Thoughts clearly in this Matter, I reckon the *Temple* was deſigned for theſe great Purpoſes;

(1.) It was the Place to which God had confined the more ſolemn Pieces of his Worſhip, and it was not only unlawful, but downright ſinful, to perform even Acts of commanded Worſhip any where elſe; and therefore *David* ſays, *Pſal.* xxvi. 8. *Lord, I have loved the Habitation of thy Houſe, and the Place where thine Honour dwelleth.* Which indeed ſays, under that Diſpenſation the Means of Grace could not be had any where elſe: But it will not ſay that this *Temple* was all the Means of Grace, but only that it was what made them acceptable to God, and profitable to the Perſon, provided the other Qualifications requiſite were added, as *Faith, Love,* &c. Yet it cannot be refuſed, but there were eſtabliſhed Means of Grace before either the *Tabernacle* or the *Temple* were built, and after they were both deſtroyed; and ſo this Thought ſhould be well cautioned.

(2.) The Temple was a notable Emblem of the *Humane Nature of Chriſt,* as our Lord himſelf teſtifies, while he ſays, *John* ii. 19. *Deſtroy this Temple, and in three Days I will raiſe it up.* This clears the firſt, and ſhews the Efficacy of all Means to be owing to Chriſt, and that it is only in and through him they are acceptable.

(3.) The Temple is an Emblem or Figure of the *Church of God,* the myſtical Body of Chriſt; and therefore the Apoſtle ſays, 2 *Cor.* vi. 16. *Ye are the Temple of the Living God.* And, 1 *Cor.* iii. 16. *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* Every particular Believer is a conſtituent Part of this *Temple,* and therefore they are called *ſpiritual and living Stones.*

Theſe Things being premiſed, it will be no hard Matter to win to the Meaning of *Temple* in this Place; nor can I find, that *Temple* in Scripture has any other Acceptations. It is plain then, we are not to underſtand it of any umbratile Ordinance, but here it is to be meant of the Thing ſignified by theſe Shadows. Now, if we apply it to the *laſt,* then the Senſe is, there will be no Church, no Believers or Saints; which is falſe, whether it be underſtood of Heaven or Earth: And as little can be taken for the *ſecond*; for then, tho' there ſhould be a Church, it would want a Head, which would be to make the *New Jeruſalem* as wretched as ever *Babylon* was; and therefore of Neceſſity we are to underſtand it of the *firſt.* And ſo, while it is ſaid there was no Temple in it, it ſhews the Worſhip of God will not be confined to any one Spot of the World, but that *the Knowledge of Chriſt will fill the whole Earth, as the Waters cover the Sea*: And therefore it is added in the next Clauſe, *For the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the Temple of it*: Then the true Worſhippers of God will worſhip him every where in *Spirit and Truth.* If it be objected, This is the Privilege of the *Goſpel-church* in all Ages, and ſo there is no *new Thing here,* tho' it be advanced with ſo much Solemnity. Anſwer, It is not to be thought that the Church of Chriſt, in that Period, will be different in Kind from what it now is, or has been formerly; yet that State will have by far the Advantage of all that went before it, as we heard from *Chap.* xx. 4.

3. The *Spirit of God* is not here oppoſing the *immediate* Viſion of God in Heaven, to the ſpiritual Views of him by the Saints on Earth, according to that of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 12. *Now we ſee through a Glaſs darkly, but then Face to Face*: But the Oppoſition is betwixt the *umbratile Preſence* of God, of old under the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation, and his *gracious Preſence* under the *New Teſtament*; yea, and further oppoſing the great Effuſion of the *Holy Spirit* at that Time, to the more ſcanty Communications thereof in all Ages before.

II. The additional Reaſon, *For the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the Temple of it.* This juſtifies the Senſe of *Temple* I gave above, that tho' there will not be a viſible and material Temple in this *New Jeruſalem* as in the old, yet there will be what will be better, and more glorious, *viz.* the Truth of what was ſignified by the *old Temple,* will be powerfully and graciouſly there. That Difficulty ſtarted here is of little Moment, *viz.* The old Temple was deſigned for God to dwell in, but, by this Expreſſion, it would appear that the Citizens of this *Jeruſalem* are to dwell in God. This is no more than what we find ordinarily expreſſed in Scripture, when the Union betwixt *God* and *Believers,* or between *Chriſt* and *Believers,* is declared by *God's being in them,* and at other Times by *their being in God,* to ſhew there will be a mutual Union betwixt God and his People. It is one of the great Promiſes made to the Goſpel-church, *Iſa.* viii. 14. *God ſhall be for a Sanctuary.* This ſhews the great Advantage

vantage of this City above all other Cities, that the Preſence of God will make it as holy, and all of it as much conſecrate and devoted to God, as the Tabernacle or Temple were of old; which all own to be the Senſe of that notable Prophecy, *Zech.* xiv. 20, 21. *In that Day ſhall there be upon the Bells of the Horſes, Holineſs unto the Lord: And the Pots in the Lord's Houſe ſhall be like the Bowls before the Altar: Yea, every Pot in* Jeruſalem, *and in* Judah, *ſhall be Holineſs unto the Lord of Hoſts,* &c.

If it be objected, How then ſhall we do with the Temple of *Ezekiel*? Chap. xli. *&c.* For there he gives a very beautiful View of it, as it will be in this *New Jeruſalem*. *Brightman* tells us in one Word, That that Temple was truly no Temple at all. This is an eaſy, but a moſt unjuſtifiable, Method of treating the Word of God: I rather take that full Account given by *Ezekiel* of this Temple, to be an emblematical Account of God's Favour, Preſence and All-ſufficiency, for both Goſpel-miniſters and Believers; for in him they will find more ſpiritual Conveniency and Beauty, than was to be met with externally under the old Temple of *Jeruſalem*. None that I know of ever dream'd, that Temple, ſo graphically deſcribed by the Prophet, was to be material; yea, all take it ſpiritually: So that this Context ſeems, in few Words, to be the Key of that obſcure Piece of Prophecy; Nor can it be expected any will travel ſuccesfully in the Explication of it, who take not this Method. As for the Words of this Reaſon, we had them before, *Chap.* iv. 8. *Chap.* v. 6. where they are ſtill uſed with reſpect to the Church on Earth, and ſo I preſume they are to be applied here.

23 And the City had no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon to ſhine in it: For the Glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof.

In the next diſtinguiſhing Privilege we have, 1. The Thing. 2. The Reaſon thereof.

1. The Privilege, *The City had no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon to ſhine in it.* Many conclude this an unanſwerable Argument, proving the whole Context is to be underſtood of *Heaven*; but then they are obliged to take this in the moſt literal Senſe: And when that is done, it is not ſaid there was neither Sun nor Moon in it, only they had no need of them, *i. e.* they were better provided. But I paſs this, becauſe truly the Words are *prophetical*, and not at all to be underſtood of *Heaven*; as will be plain from collating with this, a Paſſage from the old Prophets, *Iſa.* xxiv. 23. *Then the Moon ſhall be confounded, and the Sun aſhamed, when the Lord of Hoſts ſhall reign in Mount* Zion, *and in* Jeruſalem, *and before his Ancients glorioufly.* Which all underſtand of the proſperous State of the Church, when all her Calamities are over. And yet nearer, *Iſa.* lx. 19. *The Sun ſhall be no more thy Light by Day, neither for Brightneſs ſhall the Moon give Light unto thee: But the Lord ſhall be unto thee an everlaſting Light, and thy God thy Glory.* Theſe Texts are underſtood in a comparative Senſe by theſe Expoſitors who would take the Words literally and abſolutely in our Text, which ſeems not ſo equal; and indeed the general Strain of the Learned about theſe, and ſuch like Paſſages, is this, That the Expreſſion is purely *prophetical*, and declares, that in theſe pureſt Times of the Goſpel, the ſpiritual Light of the Goſpel will outſhine the Light of the Sun and of the Moon in Naturals. That this is the Scope of the Prophet *Iſaiah*, ſeems indiſputable from the next Verſe, *v.* 20. *Thy Sun ſhall no more go down, neither ſhall thy Moon withdraw itſelf; for the Lord ſhall be thine everlaſting Light, and the Days of thy Mourning ſhall be ended.* All this is ſaid on the general Call of the *Gentiles*, as will be evident to any who will read this *Chapter*, and is owned by all that write on it; and that plainly it reſpects that Period of the Church our *Apoſtle* is now ſpeaking of. But a late Author, gravel'd with this Authority, tells us, That Prophecy of *Iſaiah* may have a partial Accompliſhment in the Converſion of the *Gentiles*; Yet it ſtretcheth its furtheſt Scope to repreſent the *Joys* in *Heaven*. Should all this be granted, I ſee not what they could make of it further than this, That that Condition of the Church, here pointed at, will be like Heaven than any other Period before it; and that therefore it muſt be firſt on Earth, and then in Heaven, which is all we contend for. And I further aver, that *the having no Need of either Sun or Moon*, wherever that Clauſe occurs in Scripture, is not immediately to be apply'd to Heaven. None aſſert this to be the Senſe of the *Quotations*; All own this Text in the *Revelation* is borrowed from them: And to fix a different Senſe upon theſe Words in *John*'s Mouth, from what they had in *Iſaiah*'s, is not to be

juſtified, eſpecially that our *Lord* and his *Apoſtles* always uſed the Old Teſtament Texts in their genuine Senſe.

The very Way of expreſſing this in the Text, is a clear Proof it cannot be meant of *Heaven*: For to tell us the *ſuperceleſtial State* of the Saints will be ſuch as will have no Need of ſublunary Comforts, is no extraordinary Thing; nor is the contrary thought or affirmed by any, but theſe who underſtand not the Scriptures nor the Power of God; like theſe who dream'd there's Marrying or giving in Marriage after the Reſurrection: Yet we are certain, theſe Perſons in their Principles deny'd a Reſurrection. It is then a moſt hungry Account of *Heaven*, if this ſhould be all the Senſe of it. But to tell the Church, that her ſpiritual Splendor even on Earth ſhould be ſo great, as outſhine the moſt glorious of created Comforts, and that for a long Time without Interruption, is a notable Promiſe, and a wonderful Encouragement, and which we find not unuſual in Scripture, *Iſaiah* xxx. 26. *The Light of the Moon ſhall be as the Light of the Sun, and the Light of the Sun ſhall be ſeven-fold as the Light of ſeven Days, in that Day that the Lord bindeth up the Breach of his People, and healeth the Stroke of their Wound.* All underſtand this of the Glory of the Church upon Earth.

To clear this ſomewhat further, let us reſume a little from what is above ſaid. The *ſpiritual* World will be almoſt as broad and wide as the *natural* World; And theſe ſpiritual Comforts the Church will then enjoy, ſhall be as much cheering and influencing of the Church, as the natural Sun and Moon are to the natural Earth. The Inhabitants of this new *Jeruſalem* will have juſt Notions of their ſpiritual Bliſs. From all it muſt follow, they will prize the Influences of the *Sun of Righteouſneſs* as much above the natural Sun, as the one is above the other in the Dignity of his Nature: And then I am ready to believe we have got the full Senſe of the Words.

II. The Ground or Reaſon of this, *For the Glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof.* Some would have this bear Alluſion to the Creation, when we read of *Light* before the *Sun* was created: But this has little of Solidity in it. We are therefore to fetch this from the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. lx. 19. *The Lord ſhall be unto thee an everlaſting Light, and thy God thy Glory*: Which all Expoſitors underſtand of the *Light* of the *Goſpel*, and the ſpiritual Graces of all Sorts communicate by Chriſt unto his Church, by which he aſſures her ſhe ſhould not decay and fall back, as had often happened before to her; ſhe was therefore to depend upon his Faithfulneſs, that ſhe ſhall have a conſtant and uniform State of Comfort and Proſperity for all the Space of *that Thouſand Years*. This is the very Senſe given by the ſame Apoſtle, 1 *John* i. 5, 7. *This is the Meſſage which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is Light, and in him is no Darkneſs at all. If we walk in the Light, as he is in the Light, we have Fellowſhip one with another, and the Blood of his Son Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all Sin.* From all which it is evident, we are under no Neceſſity to *flee* to *Heaven* for the Senſe of this, but may underſtand it of the Church of Chriſt upon Earth: Only it denotes, that the Proſperity of the Church will not be chequer'd with Adverſity, as it fares with the Day of Sun-ſhine and the Night of Darkneſs; Nor will her State be liable to *waxing* and *waning*, like the *Moon*. Beſides, the Word λύχνος, a *Lamp* or Lanthorn, ſeems to pin down the Senſe of this Text to the *temporal* State of the Church; for it ſignifies properly that which gives a mediate Light, and theſe who ſee the Light may be ſaid to ſee but through a Glaſs; and ſo it muſt differ from the immediate and *beatifick Viſion* the Saints have in Heaven.

24 And the Nations of them which are ſaved, ſhall walk in the Light of it: And the Kings of the Earth do bring their Glory and Honour into it.

25 And the Gates of it ſhall not be ſhut at all by Day: For there ſhall be no Night there.

26 And they ſhall bring the Glory and Honour of the Nations into it.

27 And there ſhall in no wiſe enter into it any Thing that defileth, neither whatſoever worketh Abomination, or *maketh* a Lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

The third Excellency of this new *Jeruſalem* is from the Nature and Quality of theſe who have Acceſs thereto. Old *Jeruſalem* knew no Deniſons but theſe of the Tribes of *Jacob*: But this will welcome *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, provided they be bleſſed with the ſpiritual Qualifications neceſſary to conſtitute them the Children of faithful *Abraham*; other-

otherwiſe they will be excluded. So that in theſe Verſes we have an Account, 1. Of theſe that will have Acceſs. 2. Of theſe that will be excluded.

I. There is an Account of ſuch as will be admitted, and the ready Acceſs they will have, *Verſes* 24, 25, 26. where we are to view two Sorts of Perſons, and the Acceſs prepared for them.

1. The firſt Sort of Perſons we have mentioned in the firſt Clauſe of *v.* 24. where we have them deſcribed by theſe Things notable enough;

(1.) They are called *Nations*. The Prophet *Iſaiah* has a Paſſage will give Light to theſe three Verſes, *Iſa.* lx. 3, 4, 5. *The* Gentiles *ſhall come to thy Light, and Kings to the Brightneſs of thy Riſing. Lift up thine Eyes round about thee, and ſee: All they gather themſelves together, they come to thee: Thy Sons ſhall come from far, and thy Daughters ſhall be nurſed at thy Side. Then thou ſhalt ſee, and flow together, and thine Heart ſhall fear and be inlarged, becauſe the Abundance of the Sea ſhall be converted unto thee, the Forces of the Nations ſhall come to thee.* When theſe two Paſſages are compared together (and no doubt the ſame Spirit inſpired both Prophets) we cannot doubt but they both point at the ſame Thing. I am of the Mind, *Nations* in this Place muſt be underſtood in a threefold Oppoſition; 1. To the *Jews*, and ſo they are not of *Abraham*'s Race. 2. To their *Kings*, of whom we read afterwards. 3. To a *few*, yea, or the ſmalleſt Part of the Nations: For if the *ſmalleſt* Part of a Nation be only *converted*, we cannot ſay it is a *National Converſion*: As, tho' there be many Proteſtants in *France*, yet the Bulk of that People is *Popiſh*; and therefore it is called a *Popiſh Nation*. But, when that Time comes, the Nations will come unto *Chriſt's Standard* in Bulk, at leaſt the far greater Part will embrace the Truth.

(2.) They are deſcribed from their Relation to God, and ſo they are called *of them that are ſaved*. There are great Debates about the rendering of this Conſtruction. Some read it, *of them that ſhall be ſaved*; and ſo it is a Prophecy: Others will have it in the Preterite, *of them that have been ſaved*; and ſo it is an Hiſtory: But indeed they are both out of it; for it is in the *preſent Tenſe*, and muſt neceſſarily be ſo, ſeeing he is deſcribing a Viſion, of which the Emblem was in his View. Juſt ſo, all that is before it runs in the *preſent*; *God and the Lamb are the Temple of it. The City hath no Need of the Sun: The Lamb is the Light thereof.* Whence it is reaſonable we ſhould underſtand this the very ſame Way: Yet I own it may be cloſſer rendred than in our Tranſlation thus, *The Nations of the Saved ſhall walk in the Light of it.* It is then to be enquired, What we are to underſtand by *being ſaved*? Some contend this cannot take Place in Time, and that it begins upon their Admiſſion to Glory. I ſhall not refuſe but it is oftentimes ſo neceſſarily to be underſtood, but I am as certain it is not always taken in that Senſe, particularly *Acts* ii. 47. where indeed our Tranſlators take it in the *future*, but it ſhould be turned, *God daily added to the Church ſuch as be ſaved.* So that this is a Character may agree to every Soul whom God effectually calls. We have it yet much plainer, 2 *Tim.* i. 9. *Who hath ſaved us, and called us with an holy Calling.* And, *Eph.* ii. 8. *By Grace ye are ſaved.* And, to add but one Inſtance more, *According to his Mercy he ſaved us, by the Waſhing of Regeneration, and Renewing of the Holy Ghoſt.* If we take it ſo, the Senſe is eaſy, and we need not run to Tropes and Figures to ſqueeze any Thing from the Text further than at firſt View offers, and ſo the Text points very plainly at their Converſion.

(3.) They are deſcribed from their Exerciſe, *They ſhall walk in the Light of it*, i. e. of the *new Jeruſalem*. This is certainly the ſame with that Expreſſion, *Iſa.* lx. 3. *They ſhall come to thy Light.* Nor can we ſay, that all this is to be done at a Diſtance, and that they are not to enter this City; for it is twice added in this Paſſage, *They bring their Honour and Glory into it*; which ſays they are certainly to enter this City. The plain Meaning then of this I take to be, *Their Converſations will be only ſuch as become the Goſpel*, in all their ſeveral Stations; a ſure Evidence of Converſion. This proves that Goſpel-Holineſs will be diffuſed through all the Corners of the Church; they will all be the Children of the Light and of the Day, and therefore will not ſleep.

2. The next Sort of Perſons have Acceſs to this City, we have in the ſecond Clauſe of *v.* 24. deſcribed, 1. From their Character. 2. Their Practice.

(1.) They are deſcribed from their Character, *Kings of the Earth*; which we may well take to be the Kings of theſe Nations before ſpoke of, eſpecially that they warrantably make free with the Honour of the Nations. *Iſaiah* ſpeaketh to the ſame Purpoſe, *Iſa.* xlix. 22, 23. *Thus ſaith the Lord God, I will lift up mine Hand unto the* Gentiles, *and ſet up my Standard to the People, and they ſhall bring thy Sons in their Arms, and thy Daughters ſhall be carried upon their Shoulders: And Kings ſhall be thy nurſing Fathers, and Queens thy nurſing Mothers.* Some make a Difficulty here about the Deſignation, *Kings of the Earth*, and would have them to be ſo named, becauſe they were earthly, as leaſt before their Converſion; but, after this Change, they are to loſe that

Character, and become *Kings of the Eaſt*, as we find the one oppoſed to the other, *Chap.* xvi. *v.* 12. compared with *v.* 14. But here we have no Oppoſition made of theſe *Kings* to any other *Kings*, and therefore are not tied to that Rule. Beſides, we ſee that converted Nations have a Deſignation not much different, *Chap.* xi. 15. *The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdom of our Lord.* And therefore I rather incline to take this as a Note of *Univerſality*, q. d. *All the Kings of the Earth*; and then will our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* be *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* But, however we take *Kings of the Earth*, it will not ſold to the Notion of Heaven; for they ceaſe to be *Kings of the Earth*, before they be admitted there. This will be further plain from what is added,

(2.) Concerning their Practice, *they bring their Honour and Glory into it.* Some Parallels to this, will make the Senſe more eaſy; *Iſa.* xlv. 14. *Thus ſaith the Lord, The Labour of* Egypt, *and Merchandice of* Ethiopia, *and of the* Sabeans, *Men of Stature, ſhall come over unto thee, and they ſhall be thine; they ſhall come after thee in Chains, they ſhall come over, and they ſhall fall down unto thee, and they ſhall make Supplications unto thee, ſaying, Surely God is in thee, and there is none elſe, there is no God.* And, *Pſal.* lxxii. 9, &c. *They that dwell in the Wilderneſs ſhall bow before him: And his Enemies ſhall lick the Duſt. The Kings of* Tarſhiſh *and of the Iſles ſhall bring Preſents: The Kings of* Sheba *and* Seba *ſhall offer Gifts. Yea, all Kings ſhall fall down before him: All Nations ſhall ſerve him.* It appears a Matter very much indifferent what we mean by *Glory* and *Honour*, for certainly it muſt be all that which conſtitutes them *Kings*; here they bring not the *Glory* of others, nor will it ſay they are ſtript of their own *Glory*, for it is ſaid they come with it; ſo that they will give themſelves, as well as theirs, to Chriſt. It would yet tell worſe, to underſtand this of their *Glorification*; for all muſt go to Heaven for it, where they get Glory, but give none, for that is a Crown given to all. By this then we are to mean, that all theſe *Kings* will imploy themſelves, and all they have and can command, as much for the Honour and Advancement of *Chriſt*'s *Kingdom*, as ever they did improve the ſame for the Growth and Stability of *Babylon*, i. e. they will honour God with their Subſtance; and eſpecially, they will be careful to take all juſt and laudible Meaſures to bring in their ſeveral People to the Love and Obedience of *Jeſus Chriſt*: This is very agreeable to the Scripture, *Prov.* xiv. 28. *In the Multitude of People is the King's Honour*; and, 'tis no leſs true of his Safety. It is a very looſe Way of gloſſing, to tell us, This is a Reſemblance, and that Heaven is as glorious, as if all the Kings of the Earth had extracted the Quinteſſence of all that they have valuable, and brought it to one Place; for there is no Agreement betwixt the Two: Beſides, it croſſeth the moſt plain and natural Reading of the Text.

3. The Acceſs prepared for them, *the Gates of it ſhall not be ſhut at all by Day.* We have a Prophecy in the like Terms concerning the Goſpel-church, *Iſa.* lx. 11. *Thy Gates ſhall be open continually, they ſhall not be ſhut Day nor Night*: Which plainly declares the *Peace* and *Security* of the *Church* all that Time; there will be no Enemy, againſt whom they need to cloſe their Gates. And further, it ſays, That all that Time there will be a great Concourſe of People thronging into it, as is plain from *v.* 26. which ſhews the Paſſage cannot be underſtood of *Heaven*, for all will enter into it at once after the Day of Judgment, and then both Heaven and Hell will be ſhut.

'Tis added as the Reaſon why theſe Gates will be continually open, *For there ſhall be no Night there.* This, many think, points out *Heaven* plainly, and ſo they take it in a moſt *literal* Senſe: But, if they will have this *literally*, why not the firſt Clauſe alſo? and then we want the Senſe of the *Gates of Heaven*, and the Meaning of *Day*; for theſe learned Perſons are not at Pains to explain either: And ſo it is reaſonable both Parts of the Text be taken *prophetically*, and by *Day* underſtand *Proſperity*, and by *Night Adverſity*; and ſo, while the firſt is eſtabliſhed, and the other denied, the Senſe is, All that Period will be one uninterrupted and continued Chain of perfect Peace and Proſperity. So we have *Night* and *Day* taken by the Prophet, *Zech.* xiv. 7. *It ſhall be one Day which ſhall be known to the Lord, not Day nor Night*: Which all underſtand of a *State* of the Church, wherein Adverſity is mixed with Proſperity; but this *State* will be *unmixed Proſperity.*

Next, we have the Exerciſe of the Kings of the Earth repeated, *v.* 26. *They ſhall bring the Glory and Honour of the Nations into it.* The Senſe of the Words is given above. It remains to be enquired, Who ſhall bring this Honour and Glory of the Nations into the *new Jeruſalem*? Some think, the *Jews* will once more ſtrip the Nations, as they did formerly the *Egyptians*; but, if they are never to be ſet up diſtinct from the reſt of the Chriſtian Church, this Notion muſt fall to the Ground. Others would have it taken *perſonally*, *It ſhall be brought*; but this thwarts the Rules of Grammar. I ſee no Harm, tho' this be meant of the Kings before-mentioned, added again here, after

after the Account of the *Acceſs* to this City, to ſhew what Uſe would be made of the open Gates.

II. There is the Character of theſe will be excluded out of this City, *v.* 27. for, tho' its Gates be continually open, yet will they not admit all indifferently; This City will not be like *Noah*'s Ark, to contain *Clean* and *Unclean*. Here we have a double *Negative*, which with the *Greeks* is a very ſtrong one, and which our Tranſlation humours, while it renders it, *in nowiſe*. We have this Deſcription of the *Excluded* in ſeveral Steps, to which is added an Account of theſe can only be *admitted*.

1. The Account of the *Excluded*, in three Expreſſions;

(1.) *Any Thing that defileth*; originally, every common Thing, or every unclean Thing; for the Word κοινὸς ſignifies ordinarily unclean, *Acts* xi. 9. *What God hath cleanſed, that call thou not common.* We have a Promiſe much to the ſame Purpoſe, *Iſa.* lii. 1. *From henceforth there ſhall no more come into thee the Uncircumciſed and the Unclean.* This, in the Senſe of the Law, debarred all the Nations, and all the *Jews* ceremonially *unclean*. Here it is to be taken in a Goſpel-ſenſe, and aſſures us, all eſtranged from God, and the *Covenants* of Promiſe, will be excluded; none but the circumciſed in Heart can enter.

(2.) *Whatſoever worketh Abomination.* No doubt, πᾶν, the Mark of *Univerſality*, is to be repeated here. By *Abomination*, the Scripture means *Idols*, and ſo, by working of Abomination, we are to underſtand *Idolatry*: So *Milcom* is called the Abomination of *Ammon*, 1. Kings xi. 5, *&c.* *Chemoſh* of *Moab*, *Aſhtoreth* of the *Zidonians*, 2 Kings xxiii. 13. Here then, all *Idolaters* are forbid Communion with the Inhabitants of this City. Which, I think, deſtroys the Principle of promiſcuous Communion ſo many are fond of: For, when the Church arrives at her Perfection on Earth, that will not be allowed; nor indeed ſhould it be indulged now, by any Church, who pretend to copy after the Standard.

(3.) *Whoſoever maketh a Lie. Maketh* is not in the Original; but both the Verb *Worketh*, and the Mark of Univerſality is to be repeated; and then the Senſe is, *All that worketh a Lie.* No doubt, *Idols* are *Lies*, and *Idolaters* may be called *Liars*: Yet it would appear we are to diſtinguiſh theſe three from one another; And then by the firſt will be meant all that are *immoral*, by the ſecond all *Idolaters*, and then by this third all *Hypocrites*, who pretend to be what they are not, who have a Form of Godlineſs, but are deſtitute of the Power thereof: All theſe are excluded from this City.

2. We have the Character of theſe who only can enter into this City, *They which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.* We explained this, *Chap.* xiii. 8. *Chap.* xx. 15. It has ſeveral Deſignations; 'Tis called the *Book of Life*, becauſe theſe that ſhall be ſaved, are written in it from all Eternity, and ſo 'tis the Book of Election: 'Tis called the *Lamb's Book*, becauſe Chriſt ſatisfied Juſtice for all theſe only; ſo that the Father's Election, and the Son's Redemption, are equally broad and wide. This is a Truth we ſhould maintain againſt all oppoſite Errors; and from the Collation of this Text with *Chap.* xx. 15. 'tis plain, all not written in this Book will be damned, and all written in it ſhall be effectually called: And, from the two Parts of this Verſe, it is as evident, all the Elect will renounce all Impurity, Idolatry and Hypocriſy.

Some bring an Argument hence to prove the whole Context concerns the triumphant Church, becauſe that Book will not be opened before the Day of Judgment, and conſequently this muſt be upon the Back of it: However, it would not do well to apply all theſe Paſſages of Scripture to Heaven that mention the being written in the Book of Life, as is ſufficiently plain from the Uſe of the Phraſe in ſeveral Places of Scripture: And it is uſed alſo by the Apoſtle *Paul*, Philip. iv. 3. *My Fellow-labourers, whoſe Names are in the Book of Life*; And yet they were on Earth themſelves at the Time: Nor will this Text bear any ſuch Inference. However, it muſt be owned, this is even as good as the moſt Part of the Reaſons they bring to ſupport their grand Hypotheſis, That the Joys of Heaven are deſcribed in theſe two Chapters.

CHAP. XXII.

IN the firſt five Verſes of this Chapter, we have the other three Excellencies of this *new Jeruſalem*; and, in the reſt of the Chapter, the Epilogue or Concluſion of the whole Prophecy.

1 AND he ſhewed me a pure River of Water of Life, clear as Cryſtal, proceeding out of the Throne of God, and of the Lamb.

The fourth Excellency of this City is repreſented to us under the Emblem of a *River*, which the Apoſtle tells us, *He*, i. e. the Angel, of whom we heard, *Chap.* xxi. 9. *ſhewed me*, i. e. in a Viſion did emblematically reveal to him; and ſo the Figure is a *River*.

A City without Water would be a moſt diſconſolate and unpleaſant Thing, or, without other Water than what a few Pools can afford, would be much ſtraitned; and therefore we ſee Cities at the greateſt Pains to provide themſelves with *Water*, and many a Time at no ſmall Charge. And theſe Cities are reckoned the beſt watered, who have Rivers running by, or thorow them: So old *Babylon* was watered with the River *Euphrates*: Old *Jeruſalem* alſo had Water ſufficient for the Exigence of the Inhabitants; We read of the Pool of *Bethesda*, John v. which had five Porches, and of the Brook *Kidron*. Some tell us of another Rivulet called *Gallirrohe*, beſides a Number of Pools and Fountains we read nothing of in Scripture. Some would have this Verſe to have an Alluſion to the River of *Eden*, Gen. ii. 10. which was parted into *four Streams*, that it might the more eaſily water the ſeveral Parts of *Paradiſe*; and they conclude, this River being aſcribed to the heavenly Paradiſe, aſſures us, that every Thing is in Heaven that makes for Pleaſure or Uſe. But we ſhewed before, that *Paradiſe* may ſignify the Church of God upon Earth, on *Chap.* ii. 7. eſpecially this moſt perfect State: Beſides, we have no Mention of *Paradiſe* here, and therefore this will make nothing for their Point.

I am, however, of the Mind, there is here an Alluſion, if not more, to ſome former Prophecies; for, when our Prophet ſpeaks the ſame Words with the *old Prophets*, we may allow him to mean the ſame Things: This is the eaſieſt and moſt natural Way of reſolving the Difficulties of this Text. I obſerved before, that the Prophet *Ezekiel* and *John* are by the ſame Spirit let into the Knowledge of the ſame Things, and generally by the like Emblems, which we find here moſt remarkably; for this Verſe ſeems to be the Subſtance of that Viſion *Ezekiel* had, *Ezek.* xlvii. 1, &c. *of the Waters of the Sanctuary*. 'Tis true, *Ezekiel* purſues the Emblem further and at more Length, and the Apoſtle more ſhortly, yet there is no Inconſiſtency betwixt them. *Zechariah* hath ſomething to this Purpoſe, *Zech.* xiv. 8. *It ſhall be in that Day, that living Waters ſhall go out from* Jeruſalem, *Half of them toward the former Sea, and Half of them towards the hinder Sea, in Summer and in Winter it ſhall be.* All own, both theſe Paſſages concern the *New Teſtament Church* on Earth, and have not the leaſt or remoteſt View to Heaven; and therefore 'tis reaſonable we have the ſame Thoughts here. And, what Alluſion may be to the Garden of *Eden*, is to be underſtood as it was a Type of the Church of God governed by the *Mediator*, and not as it was the Place of Mankind in a State of Perfection before Sin: Nor do any of the *Learned* allege either *Ezekiel* or *Zechariah* to have a View to *Eden* in their Viſions or Words. Juſt ſo, there is as little Ground here; But there is a plain Reference by *our Apoſtle* to the other *two Prophets*. And tho' we have often Mention of *Rivers* in Scripture, yet I nowhere find them to point at any Thing in *Heaven*; and, it might be expected, ſuch a ſtrange Thought would have come into the World better ſupported, or elſe to be leſs regarded. We have a River often mentioned with Reſpect to the *Church of God* on Earth, *Pſal.* xxxvi. 8. *They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the Fatneſs of thy Houſe, and thou ſhalt make them drink of the Rivers of thy Pleaſure.* And, *Pſal.* xlvi. 4. *There is a River, the Streams whereof ſhall make glad the City of God, the holy Place of the Tabernacles of the Moſt High.*

A *River*, then, is one of the Excellencies of *Ezekiel*'s City, and of *John*'s new Jeruſalem; with this only Difference, *John*'s *River* ſeems to be all of a Piece, whereas *Ezekiel*'s had ſeveral different Soundings, *Ezek.* xlvii. 3. Near the Head it was but *Ankle-deep*; a Thouſand Cubits further down, it was *Knee-deep*, v. 4. after another Thouſand, it was up to the *Loins*; and upon the third Thouſand, it became an impaſſible River. This has moved ſome to think the two Prophets had not the ſame Thing in View; but, to me, it is a Proof of the Contrary, and that both of them had the ſame Period revealed to them, with this Difference, the Prophet *Ezekiel* had a Viſion of the *Goſpel-Church* in its Beginning, when the River was very ſhallow; but afterwards it got more Additions, and more after that, till it comes to the Period here pointed at, when it will be very great, at which Time only the Apoſtle had it manifeſted to him; for the Beginnings, yea, and the ſecond Condition thereof might be over before he had theſe Viſions, or about the Time thereof, and the third might be diſcovered to him under the *ſixth Seal*;

Seal; and now, that *overpowering State* of the Church conſtitutes the *Millennium*, when the Strength of Godlineſs will, like a River, carry all before it.

Next, we are to enquire, *What this River ſignifies*? Some think, it is to be meant of the Knowledge of the Doctrine of Chriſt, which they take to be the Senſe of *Zechariah*, Chap. xiv. 8. *In that Day living Waters*, &c. *q. d.* The Doctrine of Salvation through a *crucified Saviour*, ſhall be firſt preached at *Jeruſalem*, and therefrom be diffuſed thorow the whole habitable World: And alſo the Senſe of that, *Hab.* ii. 14. *The Earth ſhall be filled with the Knowledge of the Glory of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea*: And ſeveral other Expreſſions elſewhere, *Pſal.* xlvi. 4. Others, by this River, underſtand the ſaving Graces of the Spirit of God, *John* iv. 14. *The Water that I ſhall give him, ſhall be in him a Well of Water, ſpringing up into everlaſting Life.* And yet more plainly, *John* vii. 38. *He that believeth on me, as the Scripture ſaith, out of his Belly ſhall flow Rivers of living Waters.* This is explained in the next Verſe, *This he ſpake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him ſhould receive.* 'Tis alſo the Senſe of that Prophecy, *Iſa.* xliv. 3. *I will pour Water upon him that is thirſty, and Floods upon the dry Ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my Bleſſing upon thine Offspring.* We find alſo *particular Graces* compared to a *River*; as *Peace*, Iſa. lxvi. 12. *I will extend Peace to her like a River.* The Conſolations of the Spirit, *Pſal.* xxxvi. 8. *Thou ſhalt make them drink of the Rivers of thy Pleaſures.*

It were hard to ſeparate theſe two Senſes, ſo much a-kin to other, as that the one does neceſſarily include the other: For there can be no *ſaving Knowledge*, but it muſt be accompanied with other *Graces*; and there can be no *Grace*, where there is no *ſaving Knowledge*. The *Analogy* betwixt ſaving Grace and a River is ſo obvious, it would be loſt Labour to inſiſt on it. In ſhort, it ſays, at that Time the ſaving Manifeſtations of God will be very general, in a great Meaſure, and long Continuance, even the Space of One thouſand Years. Grace may be compared to Water, becauſe of its abſolute Neceſſity, general Uſe, comforting and cleanſing Nature, *&c.*

They give a very hungry Senſe of this, who underſtand nothing more thereby but the Sacrament of *Baptiſm*; for that is but a Mean of Grace, the Seal and Figure thereof; but this is an Emblem of Grace itſelf, yea, and of all Grace. Beſides what we have ſaid of this River in general, which I think gives the Senſe of it, we would further notice what is ſaid of it in the Text, in theſe Particulars;

1. It is a *pure River*, it has no Mudd in it, but is perfectly clean; ſo that it muſt be very wholeſom. It will be free of all Mixture of humane Doctrines or Ordinances.

2. 'Tis *Water of Life*. They ſay too little, that make all the Senſe to diſtinguiſh betwixt a River and a Winter-brook, which is commonly dry in Summer, becauſe it flows not from Springs, but Rains; for this declares the Nature of this Water, and is explained by *Ezekiel*, Chap. xlvii. 8, 9. *Theſe Waters iſſue out towards the Eaſt Country, and go down into the Deſert, and go into the Sea, which being brought into the Sea, the Waters ſhall be healed: And it ſhall come to paſs, that every Thing that liveth, which moveth, whitherſoever the River ſhall come, ſhall live; and there ſhall be a very great Multitude of Fiſh, becauſe theſe Waters ſhall come thither.* So that it is called the *Water of Life*, from its Nature and Efficacy, for it beſtows a new and ſpiritual Life wherever it comes.

3. 'Tis *clear*, Orig. ſhining *like Cryſtal*; the Beauty of it, will be equal to its other Perfections. Many a Time the Truth now is under a Cloud, but then it will be bright. See more of this on *Chap.* xxi. 11.

4. Its Spring, *Proceeding out of the Throne of God, and the Lamb.* 'Tis as great in its Spring, as on any other Conſideration. *Ezekiel* ſays, *Chap.* xlvii. 1. *The Waters iſſued from under the Threſhold of the Houſe*, here *from the Throne*; which tells, the Signification of that *Houſe*, is the Senſe of this *Throne*. We read of a Throne, *v.* 3. of this Chapter, and had it before, *Chap.* iv. where we explained it. Some think, Becauſe we have the Word *Proceeding*, we are to underſtand the *Holy Ghoſt* by this *River*: But he is nowhere ſaid to proceed from the Throne of God, but from the *Father* and the *Son*. I own, he is not obſcurely pointed at by his Works and Graces, and his Acting is correſponding to his Manner of ſubſiſting or exiſting. We have no Account of the Progreſs of this *River* here, as of that in *Ezekiel*; and therefore ſome incline to borrow it from *Ezekiel*, who tells us it went *towards the Eaſt*; which ſhews, that at the *Millennium* the Goſpel will make its Way from *Europe* to *Aſia*, &c. Whatever be of this, we ſee, from *v.* 2. it will flow from the Throne thorow the City, and conſequently it will be in all the Parts thereof; ſo that this City will be well-watered as the Garden of God.

2 In the Midſt of the Street of it, and of either Side of the River *was there* the Tree of Life, which bare twelve *Manner of* Fruits, and yieldeth her Fruit every Month, and the Leaves of the Tree *were* for the Healing of the Nations.

This is the fifth Excellency of this City. When the *Tree of Life* is added to the *Water of Life*, it ſhews the Concordance betwixt the Food and Drink of the Citizens of the *new Jeruſalem*. I ſhall not refuſe but there may be an Alluſion to that ſacramental *Tree of Life* in *Eden*, Gen. ii. 9. Yet I cannot think it is ſo immediate as we had it, *Chap.* ii. 7. the Ground of this will caſt up afterwards. However, I ſtill believe, the Signification of that *Tree*, mentioned, *Chap.* ii. will be the Senſe of this. Theſe who underſtand *Baptiſm* by the *Water of Life*, underſtand the *Lord's Supper* by the *Tree of Life*: But then, there lies the ſame Objection againſt this, as the other; for they make this but the Emblem of an Emblem. In ſo far I agree with them, that what is ſignified by the Sacrament of the Supper, is the Senſe and Meaning of this Tree; but that will not make the *Sacrament* to be the Subſtance of this *Type*. Others, by this Tree, underſtand the *Practice of Godlineſs*: But this is too narrow; for that is but the Effect of the Fruits of this Tree of Life. I hinted before, on *Chap.* ii. that by this Tree we are to underſtand our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, the Root and Stem of all Religion. As for the further Comprehenſion of the Words, we ſhall endeavour to point thereat, in theſe Particulars as they ly in the Text.

1. The Deſignation beſtowed upon this Planting in general, *The Tree of Life*. Tho' we find ξύλον often rendered *Tree*, yet it is granted by all, the Verſion is no: proper; for it is a general Word, and may be indifferently applied to any Tree, and ſo it ſignifies only the *Wood* or *Timber* of a Tree. There is another Word, δένδρον, which properly ſignifies a *Tree* whole and intire, and no more than one; but the Word in the Text may comprehend may Trees, or expreſs but the Part of one; as we find it in that Paſſage, *Acts* v. 30. *Whom ye ſlew, and hanged on a Tree*: And it is rendered a *Staff*, Mat. xxvi. 55. *Are ye come out as againſt a Thief with Swords and with Staves?* Sometimes it ſignifies a Machine made of Wood, *Acts* xvi. 24. *And made their Feet faſt in the Stocks*. But nowhere do I find it taken for one Tree; therefore I think we haſt beſt take it *collectively*, which will free us of the Neceſſity of underſtanding by it one ſingle individual Tree; or if it ſhould be reſtricted to ſignify but *one Tree*, yet that *one* will be as effectual for all Purpoſes, as if there were many. But here to be ſure it is a Word of Specification; and ſo the Meaning is, That no other Tree will find Room in this City, but the Tree of Life: This will be juſtified from *Ezekiel*, Chap. xlvii. 7. *At the Brink*, or Bank, or Shore, *of the River, were very many Trees*; which to be ſure points at a great Number: And afterwards, it is ſaid, *v.* 12. *And by the River, upon the Bank thereof, on this Side, and on that Side, ſhall grow all Tree for Meat*, in the ſingular Number: Whence it is plain, the *ſingular* Number in the *one* Verſe, is as comprehenſive as the *plural* in the other. Yet from all this, we may not conclude that particular Believers are hereby ſignified, tho' it muſt be owned they are deſigned *Trees*, and *fruitful Trees*, in ſeveral Places of Scripture; becauſe this Wood, with the Fruit thereof, will nouriſh and cheriſh all the Inhabitants of this City; and therefore we are to underſtand it only of *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Mediator, and ſpiritual Food of the Elect upon that Account. As for the diſcretive Qualification of this Tree, *viz. of Life*; it is ſo deſigned, for the ſame Reaſon that the River was called *the Water of Life*, which will appear better afterwards.

2. Where this Tree ſtood, or was, *In the Midſt of the Street of it*. There is no Verb in the Text, and indeed it would be Raſhneſs to ſupply it; for, according to the plain Running of the *Greek*, the Senſe is, *In the Midſt of the Street of it, and of either Side of the River, the Tree of Life*. However, we are ſure this Tree is there, and planted there by an omnipotent Hand; but we want Words to expreſs theſe Things: Here it falls in, by the Connexion, after the Diſcovery made by the *Angel* in the Beginning of *v.* 1. who had firſt ſhew'd him the *Water of Life*, and then ſhews him the *Tree of Life*. This *Tree* is ſaid to be *in the Midſt of the Street of it*, i. e. of the City: We had *Streets* before, *Chap.* xxi. 21. where I ſhewed it ſignifies the Place of Concourſe or Aſſemblies; and ſhall offer this further Ground therefore, from *Hamond*, that we have Mention of *Synagogue* and *Street* in the ſame Text, *Mat.* vi. 5. *The Hypocrites pray ſtanding in the Synagogue, and in the Corner of the Streets*, i. e. in the moſt publick Places, and where the greateſt Concourſes are. The Senſe of it is, None of the publick Aſſemblies will want Succeſs; Edification will be the conſtant Atten-

tendant on all religious Convocations: Which has not hitherto anſwered, to the heavy Regrete of Chriſt's faithful Servants.

3. The Order in which he beheld this Wood, *On each Side of the River*; or as we have it in *Ezekiel*, Chap. xlvii. 7. *Upon the one Side and the other*; which declares the Order and beautiful Harmony, nothing leſs than perfect Regularity. The taking the Word *Tree* or *Wood* collectively, makes the Senſe of this very eaſy, and cuts off Occaſion of engaging *Hamond*'s Criticiſms, which have but little Solidity in them. Nor will this force us to underſtand it of *mo* Saviours than *one*; the plain Meaning of it is, The Wood was everywhere through the City: The Intendment whereof is this, Chriſt is All-ſufficient, and capable to nouriſh all his People, and will ſupply all their Wants.

4. The Fruitfulneſs of this Tree, *Which bare twelve Manner of Fruits. Manner of*, is not the firſt Language, and the Clauſe will read very well without it, *Affording, or making, or bearing twelve Fruits*. Nor is it neceſſary to ſuppoſe each of theſe *Fruits* to be a different Kind, however curious ſome Thoughts are upon this Head; for the next Clauſe ſeems plainly to give the full Senſe of it, where, to keep cloſs by the *Greek*, it reads, *Yielding its own Fruit every Month*; ſo that it will be fruitful always, and have no Seaſon of Barrenneſs. What theſe *Fruits* are, may be eaſily condeſcended on, when we know that Chriſt is the Tree: For theſe Fruits are all his Purchaſe, all he has, and gives, yea, and all his People can need.

5. The Nature of the Leaves of this Wood, *The Leaves of the Tree were for the Healing of the Nations*. *Leaves* are very uſeful to Trees and their Fruit, to skreen them from Damage, and are no leſs beautiful to Spectators; but more is ſaid of theſe Leaves, they are *Medicinal*, and not to a few, but to many, even whole Nations, yea, all Nations. The only Difficulty here is, What we are to mean by theſe Leaves? They who apply the whole to *Heaven*, are eaſy about any Part of the whole Viſion, unleſs where there is any Analogy with the Joys above. Others again who think this ſhould be underſtood of ſome State of the Church on Earth, are not agreed. Some by *Leaves* underſtand *Miniſters* of the Goſpel, and think they have this Deſignation, becauſe they are produced by the Sap of the Tree; and are called *Leaves*, becauſe they drop off, and are ſucceeded by others; but the Tree continues the ſame. Their Work does indeed exactly anſwer, for they are deſigned for the Healing of the Nations. Others again by *Leaves* mean the Diſcipline of the Church, which prevents the ſpiritual Outbreaking of ſome, and heals the Breaches of others. Others underſtand by Leaves the open Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, or a Walk conform to its Rules and Laws; by which they obey that Direction, *Let your Light ſo ſhine before Men, that others ſeeing your good Works, may glorify your Father which is in Heaven*. I neither know which of theſe to chooſe, or which of them to reject: If they can be united, which I apprehend may be done without Difficulty, we will have a full and beautiful Meaning.

From the Uſe of theſe Leaves, it ſeems plain, we are to mean this Viſion of the Church upon Earth; for there is neither *Sickneſs* nor *Sores* in *Heaven*. Nor will it remove the Difficulty, to tell us, All will be in Heaven, by which the Nations were healed while upon Earth; for that is falſe: The Ordinances might with as good Reaſon be the Senſe of Leaves, as any of the reſt; I am confident God will bleſs them in a very remarkable Manner at that Time upon Earth, but there are none of them in Heaven. Beſides, here it is advanced in ſuch Terms as plainly aſſures us, theſe Leaves will be effectual in this *new Jeruſalem*; and a *Medicine* always ſuppoſes a *Malady*. Others again add, There are no Diſtinctions of Nations in Heaven: This muſt be owned a Truth; tho' one makes it abſurd, upon this Ground, That in Heaven they might have that Deſignation they paſt under on Earth: In which I ſee no Strength, unleſs he imagines the old Feuds ſhould alſo be kindled; but this is ridiculous, for all theſe Seeds of Animoſity will be extirpate before they go to Heaven; nor are they there to recover their wonted Conſtitutions, and ſo there will be no Need of healing the Nations in Heaven. This is the ſame with that of *Ezek.* xlvii. 12. *The Leaves ſhall be Medicine.*

3 And there ſhall be no more Curſe, but the Throne of God and of the Lamb ſhall be in it, and his Servants ſhall ſerve him.

4 And they ſhall ſee his Face, and his Name *ſhall be* in their Foreheads.

5 And there ſhall be no Night there, and they need no Candle, neither Light of the Sun; for the Lord God ſhall give them Light, and they ſhall reign for ever and ever.

The ſixth and laſt Excellency of this new *Jeruſalem* conſiſts in a Bundle of Privileges wrapt up in ſeveral notable Promiſes; As,

I. An Immunity from Curſe, *There ſhall be no more Curſe*; underſtand, *in it*: Which we find afterwards expreſſed, when *the Throne* of God, *&c.* is ſaid to be *in it*. Becauſe the Word *Curſe* ſignifies *devoted by a Curſe*, ſome think here is a *Metonomy*, there ſhall be no curſed Perſon, *i. e.* no wicked or abandoned Wretch: But we had ſufficient Proviſion againſt ſuch, *Chap.* xxi. 27. Nor is it ſafe to correct the Text, eſpecially that we have this Word in other Places of Scripture, where it is not thought to need any Correction, *Mat.* xxvi. 74. *He began to curſe and to ſwear*; where it is not to be taken in that Senſe: And indeed the Learned are not agreed as to the Meaning of it; and ſo I offer ſome of their Thoughts,

1. Some mean by it the *Curſe* of the *Law*. They who take the whole to Heaven, have eaſy Work of it here; for it is not to be doubted, they who are admitted to Heaven, have a total and eternal Exemption from the *Curſe* of the *Law*: But, ſeeing the reſt of the Context has plainly another View than to *Heaven* immediately, this can have no Place.

2. Others underſtand this of the Benefit of *Juſtification*, whereby in Time a Perſon is freed from the Curſe of the Law, for the Sake of Chriſt, *Rom.* viii. 1. *There is now no Condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus.* And, *Gal.* iii. 13. *He redeemed us from the Curſe, being made a Curſe for us.* Tho' I would not exclude this, yet it cannot be the whole, ſeeing it is what falls to the Share of every Believer before that Time.

3. A great many underſtand it of an Exemption from temporal Curſes, brought by Sin upon the Creature, as upon the Man, the Woman, the Ground, *&c.* Gen. iii. And they think there will be a Suſpenſion, at leaſt in a great Meaſure, of theſe; and that Plenty and Fruitfulneſs will be had without Toil and hard Labour. This does not ſeem improbable, eſpecially if we add to this, what was ſaid on *Chap.* xx. 4.

4. Others think this points at the Continuance of that happy State of the Church, that ſhe ſhall no more be expoſed to the temporal Marks of God's Diſpleaſure, as has been the Lot of many famous Churches in Times paſt; and are of the Mind this Text is from *Zechariah*, Chap. xiv. 11. *There ſhall be no more utter Deſtruction*; which all underſtand as a Promiſe of the Happineſs of the New Teſtament Church, and to have no Eye to *Heaven*: This alſo may have its Room, and then it follows, the *Church* will have a moſt bleſſed and peaceful Condition for the Space of that thouſand Years.

II. *The Throne of God and of the Lamb ſhall be in it.* Our Tranſlation brings in this with a *But*; but in the *Greek* it is καὶ, as in all the reſt; ſo that it is diſtinct from the firſt, tho' it may be alſo admitted as the Reaſon of it. We heard of the *Throne*, v. 1. It proclaims the ſpecial Preſence of God and Chriſt, and that the Church will duly regard them. The great Difficulty is, We have no Mention of the *Holy Ghoſt*. It is anſwered by ſome, Wherever the other *Two* are mentioned, the *Third* is comprehended. But we may find ſomewhat further to ſay here, from the emblematick Diſpoſition of the *Three Perſons* of the *Glorious Trinity*, Chapters iv. and v. where the Father and the Lamb are repreſented ſitting in the Midſt of the Throne, and the ſeven Spirits before the Throne, and are ſaid, *Chap.* v. 6. to be *ſent out into all the Earth*: And therefore the *Throne* of the *Holy Ghoſt* is not mentioned, becauſe his Work is to impreſs the *Hearts* of the *Elect* with his ſaving Graces. Here alſo the *Father's Throne* is mentioned, becauſe at that Time he will give his ſpecial Preſence and Countenance to his *Church* in a moſt remarkable Manner, delighting in Chriſt as the Foundation of his *Church*, and in *Believers* as the *lively Stones* built upon *him*. That the *Throne* of the *Lamb* is mentioned, is to aſſure us, in all this City there will be no *Throne* to rival Chriſt, tho' we read of Thrones, *Chap.* xx. 4. As for the Alluſions made to the Thrones of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, they are trival, for we hear of no Thrones deſigned for them: We read indeed of *Moſes's Chair*, but that Word never ſignified a Royal Seat, but the Desk of a Doctor. Much leſs is *Hamond* to be liſtned to, while he raves of *Eccleſiaſtick Tribunals*; but this is not the firſt Time he has put his hierarchical Biſhop in the Throne of God.

III. *His Servants ſhall ſerve* [worſhip] *him*, i. e. God. It is no Matter whether by *God's Servants* we underſtand Miniſters or private Chriſtians, for all are the *Servants* of God. Some thereby mean *Angels*; but this is, and always has been their Work: And here it is affirmed of ſome Piece of Service had not been before, either as to the Matter or Manner. It is true, it may be ſaid, It has been the conſtant Imploy of the Saints in all Ages to ſerve God, and therefore it can as little be meant of them; and this muſt be granted: Yet, when this Period of the Church comes, there will be a notable Difference betwixt the Worſhip then performed by theſe Inhabitants of the *New Jeruſalem*, and the Saints that lived before them their Worſhip. This does not ſay they will

will only then *begin* to ſerve God, or worſhip him; but that they will ſerve him after another Manner, and with other Advantages than ever they, or any before them, had Acceſs to do. This I ſhall endeavour to clear by a few Particulars, which will ſtate the Difference.

1. They will worſhip God in a moſt *uniform* Manner. Now there are many harſh and jarring Notes in the Muſick of the Church's Devotion, by many different Modes of Worſhip, ſome placing Religion in theſe Things which others believe have none. It will require no great Stock of Knowledge or Obſervation, to tell what Miſchiefs have flowed from theſe diviſive Courſes, and yet all theſe are at a Diſtance from the Vitals of Religion. It is true, it is a ſtumbling Thing to find ſome particular Churches make ſuch a Noiſe about theſe Things themſelves own to be indifferent in themſelves, and yet to ſtate them as neceſſary *Terms of Communion*; this muſt flow from Prejudice, Prepoſſeſſion, or ſome worſe Cauſe: Now it is very preſumable there will be no ſuch Diſcrepancy in the *Millennium*.

2. *They will ſerve and worſhip God* by the ſame *Rule*, the ſame Way underſtood, and thereby ſtrengthen one anothers Hands. It is not doubted by any that adhere to the Principles of *Reformation*, or the common Principles of Chriſtianity, when the Face of the Church was not blackned with Error, but that the Word of God is the laſt Judge of Controverſy in the Church upon Earth. This is very old, even as ancient as the Doctrine of Chriſt; yet has not this hindered many fatal Diſcords in the Church, by the Miſunderſtanding of the *Rule*, or the Miſapplication, or a wrong Turn given to ſome particular Paſſage by Men of perverſe Spirits. This has been the unhappy Mother of all the Scuffles has, either of old, or lately, hampered the Church, and extinguiſheth that Love we owe the Truth, and one another: And tho' at the Beginning the Jars might have good Men on both Sides, and none of them far from the Truth, yet afterwards theſe Things would grow up unto more Ungodlineſs: As is more than evident from the Differences betwixt *Luther* and *Calvin* at the Beginning of the Reformation; the Diſtance betwixt their Principles are much wider now than at the Beginning. But then it is to be hop'd God will ſend forth a more than ordinary Meaſure of the Illuminations of his *holy Spirit*, to prevent ſuch Breaches; which will be a wonderful Beauty to the Worſhip of God.

3. They will ſerve God without *Remiſſion* or *Intermiſſion*. Many now, in the Service of God, drive keenly, if not furiouſly, at one Time, and at another they remit and ſit up: Their Souls drive in the Ways of God, as the Wheels of *Pharaoh*'s Chariots in the *Red-ſea*, heavily; which ordinarily happens upon any of the former two, and much more if they both conſpire. A miſtaken Zeal is of the dreadfulleſt Conſequence here; for, as a great Man ſays, *While People give looſe Reins to an unguided Zeal, the Fire of the Sanctuary not only extinguiſhes the Light of the Sanctuary, but drinks up the cooling Waters of the Sanctuary*. To give this its true Name, it will caſt up to be but Paſſion and Pride. On the other Hand, a ſpiritual *Torpor* may invade even good Men, who may reckon it Wiſdom to conceal themſelves till the precious Truths of Chriſt be run down; and be brought to ſome Steps of Diſſimulation, and thereby be tempted to remit in the Courſe of their Duty. At that laſt Period of Chriſtianity, the *great Shepherd* will take Care to prevent both theſe, by eradicating Corruption.

4. They will ſerve God without external Diſturbance all that Space. Many a Time now the Saints *hang their Harps upon the Willows*, and *eat their Bread with the Peril of their Lives*; but then *there ſhall be nothing to hurt in all the holy Mountain*, Iſa. lxv. 25. which is a Promiſe made to the Goſpel-church upon Earth, and may be applied to the former three, as well as to this. We may be pretty confident this has not as yet been made out, and therefore we are to wait the Accompliſhment thereof, which will make this notable Promiſe in our Text appear in its brighteſt Luſtre: And the Church will then yield, that *God's Servants* ſerve him after a *diſtinguiſhing* Manner.

IV. *They*, i. e. his Servants, *ſhall ſee his* [i. e. God's] *Face*. Many think this ſhould determine the Point in Debate, *viz.* Whether this Context ſpeaks of *Heaven* or *Earth*? And tell us, It pleads for itſelf; which they fortify by ſome other Scriptures, where the *Face of God* is taken for the Manifeſtation of himſelf in Heaven: As, *Matth.* v. 8. *Bleſſed are the pure in Spirit, for they ſhall ſee God*. Yet ſome of theſe learned Men underſtand this *Sight of God* in a great Meaſure to be on Earth by Faith; which weakens this Argument in their Mouth, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 12. *Now we ſee through a Glaſs darkly, but then Face to Face*. 1 John iii. 1. *We ſhall ſee him as he is*. It is not to be doubted but theſe two, and a great many others to the ſame Purpoſe, muſt be underſtood of Heaven; but it is as plain the Expreſſions differ from this in the Text, and contain a great deal more at firſt View, than can be fetched from this; for they point at ſuch a Diſcovery of God in an immediate Way, as cannot be had in Time: But it

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4. Others think this points at the Continuance of that happy State of the Church, that ſhe ſhall no more be expoſed to the temporal Marks of God's Diſpleaſure, as has been the Lot of many famous Churches in Times paſt; and are of the Mind this Text is from *Zechariah*, Chap. xiv. 11. *There ſhall be no more utter Deſtruction*; which all underſtand as a Promiſe of the Happineſs of the New Teſtament Church, and to have no Eye to *Heaven*: This alſo may have its Room, and then it follows, the *Church* will have a moſt bleſſed and peaceful Condition for the Space of that thouſand Years.

II. *The Throne of God and of the Lamb ſhall be in it.* Our Tranſlation brings in this with a *But*; but in the *Greek* it is καὶ, as in all the reſt; ſo that it is diſtinct from the firſt, tho' it may be alſo admitted as the Reaſon of it. We heard of the *Throne*, v. 1. It proclaims the ſpecial Preſence of God and Chriſt, and that the Church will duly regard them. The great Difficulty is, We have no Mention of the *Holy Ghoſt*. It is anſwered by ſome, Wherever the other *Two* are mentioned, the *Third* is comprehended. But we may find ſomewhat further to ſay here, from the emblematick Diſpoſition of the *Three Perſons* of the *Glorious Trinity*, Chapters iv. and v. where the Father and the Lamb are repreſented ſitting in the Midſt of the Throne, and the ſeven Spirits before the Throne, and are ſaid, *Chap.* v. 6. to be *ſent out into all the Earth*: And therefore the *Throne* of the *Holy Ghoſt* is not mentioned, becauſe his Work is to impreſs the *Hearts* of the *Elect* with his ſaving Graces. Here alſo the *Father's Throne* is mentioned, becauſe at that Time he will give his ſpecial Preſence and Countenance to his *Church* in a moſt remarkable Manner, delighting in Chriſt as the Foundation of his *Church*, and in *Believers* as the *lively Stones* built upon *him*. That the *Throne* of the *Lamb* is mentioned, is to aſſure us, in all this City there will be no *Throne* to rival Chriſt, tho' we read of Thrones, *Chap.* xx. 4. As for the Alluſions made to the Thrones of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, they are trival, for we hear of no Thrones deſigned for them: We read indeed of *Moſes's Chair*, but that Word never ſignified a Royal Seat, but the Desk of a Doctor. Much leſs is *Hamond* to be liſtned to, while he raves of *Eccleſiaſtick Tribunals*; but this is not the firſt Time he has put his hierarchical Biſhop in the Throne of God.

III. *His Servants ſhall ſerve* [worſhip] *him*, i. e. God. It is no Matter whether by *God's Servants* we underſtand Miniſters or private Chriſtians, for all are the *Servants* of God. Some thereby mean *Angels*; but this is, and always has been their Work: And here it is affirmed of ſome Piece of Service had not been before, either as to the Matter or Manner. It is true, it may be ſaid, It has been the conſtant Imploy of the Saints in all Ages to ſerve God, and therefore it can as little be meant of them; and this muſt be granted: Yet, when this Period of the Church comes, there will be a notable Difference betwixt the Worſhip then performed by theſe Inhabitants of the *New Jeruſalem*, and the Saints that lived before them their Worſhip. This does not ſay they will

will only then *begin* to ſerve God, or worſhip him; but that they will ſerve him after another Manner, and with other Advantages than ever they, or any before them, had Acceſs to do. This I ſhall endeavour to clear by a few Particulars, which will ſtate the Difference.

1. They will worſhip God in a moſt *uniform* Manner. Now there are many harſh and jarring Notes in the Muſick of the Church's Devotion, by many different Modes of Worſhip, ſome placing Religion in theſe Things which others believe have none. It will require no great Stock of Knowledge or Obſervation, to tell what Miſchiefs have flowed from theſe diviſive Courſes, and yet all theſe are at a Diſtance from the Vitals of Religion. It is true, it is a ſtumbling Thing to find ſome particular Churches make ſuch a Noiſe about theſe Things themſelves own to be indifferent in themſelves, and yet to ſtate them as neceſſary *Terms of Communion*; this muſt flow from Prejudice, Prepoſſeſſion, or ſome worſe Cauſe: Now it is very preſumable there will be no ſuch Diſcrepancy in the *Millennium*.

2. *They will ſerve and worſhip God* by the ſame *Rule*, the ſame Way underſtood, and thereby ſtrengthen one anothers Hands. It is not doubted by any that adhere to the Principles of *Reformation*, or the common Principles of Chriſtianity, when the Face of the Church was not blackned with Error, but that the Word of God is the laſt Judge of Controverſy in the Church upon Earth. This is very old, even as ancient as the Doctrine of Chriſt; yet has not this hindered many fatal Diſcords in the Church, by the Miſunderſtanding of the *Rule*, or the Miſapplication, or a wrong Turn given to ſome particular Paſſage by Men of perverſe Spirits. This has been the unhappy Mother of all the Scuffles has, either of old, or lately, hampered the Church, and extinguiſheth that Love we owe the Truth, and one another: And tho' at the Beginning the Jars might have good Men on both Sides, and none of them far from the Truth, yet afterwards theſe Things would grow up unto more Ungodlineſs: As is more than evident from the Differences betwixt *Luther* and *Calvin* at the Beginning of the Reformation; the Diſtance betwixt their Principles are much wider now than at the Beginning. But then it is to be hop'd God will ſend forth a more than ordinary Meaſure of the Illuminations of his *holy Spirit*, to prevent ſuch Breaches; which will be a wonderful Beauty to the Worſhip of God.

3. They will ſerve God without *Remiſſion* or *Intermiſſion*. Many now, in the Service of God, drive keenly, if not furiouſly, at one Time, and at another they remit and ſit up: Their Souls drive in the Ways of God, as the Wheels of *Pharaoh*'s Chariots in the *Red-ſea*, heavily; which ordinarily happens upon any of the former two, and much more if they both conſpire. A miſtaken Zeal is of the dreadfulleſt Conſequence here; for, as a great Man ſays, *While People give looſe Reins to an unguided Zeal, the Fire of the Sanctuary not only extinguiſhes the Light of the Sanctuary, but drinks up the cooling Waters of the Sanctuary*. To give this its true Name, it will caſt up to be but Paſſion and Pride. On the other Hand, a ſpiritual *Torpor* may invade even good Men, who may reckon it Wiſdom to conceal themſelves till the precious Truths of Chriſt be run down; and be brought to ſome Steps of Diſſimulation, and thereby be tempted to remit in the Courſe of their Duty. At that laſt Period of Chriſtianity, the *great Shepherd* will take Care to prevent both theſe, by eradicating Corruption.

4. They will ſerve God without external Diſturbance all that Space. Many a Time now the Saints *hang their Harps upon the Willows*, and *eat their Bread with the Peril of their Lives*; but then *there ſhall be nothing to hurt in all the holy Mountain*, Iſa. lxv. 25. which is a Promiſe made to the Goſpel-church upon Earth, and may be applied to the former three, as well as to this. We may be pretty confident this has not as yet been made out, and therefore we are to wait the Accompliſhment thereof, which will make this notable Promiſe in our Text appear in its brighteſt Luſtre: And the Church will then yield, that *God's Servants* ſerve him after a *diſtinguiſhing* Manner.

IV. *They*, i. e. his Servants, *ſhall ſee his* [i. e. God's] *Face*. Many think this ſhould determine the Point in Debate, *viz.* Whether this Context ſpeaks of *Heaven* or *Earth*? And tell us, It pleads for itſelf; which they fortify by ſome other Scriptures, where the *Face of God* is taken for the Manifeſtation of himſelf in Heaven: As, *Matth.* v. 8. *Bleſſed are the pure in Spirit, for they ſhall ſee God*. Yet ſome of theſe learned Men underſtand this *Sight of God* in a great Meaſure to be on Earth by Faith; which weakens this Argument in their Mouth, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 12. *Now we ſee through a Glaſs darkly, but then Face to Face*. 1 John iii. 1. *We ſhall ſee him as he is*. It is not to be doubted but theſe two, and a great many others to the ſame Purpoſe, muſt be underſtood of Heaven; but it is as plain the Expreſſions differ from this in the Text, and contain a great deal more at firſt View, than can be fetched from this; for they point at ſuch a Diſcovery of God in an immediate Way, as cannot be had in Time: But it

is not ſo with this Promiſe. Beſides, from theſe Texts it will not follow, that the *Face of God* cannot be ſeen in Time: Yea, it ſeems very plain from other Scriptures, that the Saints may ſee *God's Face* in Time, tho' not in ſuch a Manner as afterwards he is to be beheld. Under the Law it was a Part of the Prieſts Bleſſing in the Name of the Lord, *Numb.* vi. 25. *The Lord make his Face to ſhine upon thee.* v. 26. *The Lord lift up his Countenance upon thee.* The Pſalmiſt prays, *Pſal.* xxxi. 16. *Make thy Face to ſhine upon thy Servant*: All which is generally taken to point at the gracious and comfortable Preſence of God, without immediate Viſion. This we find the Saints on Earth now lament the Want of, and call it the *Hidings of his Face.* Nor will that mend the Matter, that *Moſes* ſought a Sight of *God's Face*, and could only have a View of his *Back-parts*; for it is plain that by the *Face of God* there, we are to underſtand his eſſential Glory, at leaſt ſo much thereof as is to be ſeen in Heaven. *Moſes* ſaid, *Exod.* xxxiii. 18. *I beſeech thee, ſhew me thy Glory*; which God refuſed, but promiſed to ſhew him his *Goodneſs*, *v.* 19. So that this makes nothing to the Purpoſe; the Sight he required belonged to a glorified State. The Senſe then of our Text is, They ſhall have very extraordinary (in all Times paſt) and merciful Manifeſtations of God in a *Mediator*, above what other Periods of the Church had been bleſſed with, eſpecially as to the Extent thereof: For tho' ſome particular Friends of God, in all Ages, might be honoured with ſuch Views, yet this was not ſo univerſal as this ſeems to promiſe; nor ſo long continued, for it will not be interrupted all that Time.

V. *His Name ſhall be in their Foreheads*, i. e. God's Name. We had this Promiſe before, *Chap.* iii. 12. where I ſhewed *Name* may, according to Scripture, ſignify *Nature*; and ſo to write the *Name of God* upon them, is to mould them after *his Image.* I ſee not how any Thing can be brought from this, to prove the whole is to be referred to Heaven; for tho' it was promiſed to the Church of *Philadelphia*, and here ſaid to be beſtowed, it will not ſay that that weak and honeſt Church had nothing of this Privilege at the Time; it only ſays, She had not ſuch a Meaſure thereof as afterwards, upon the obeying the Recommendation ſhe was to be bleſſed with. The Senſe of this then is, They will be as like Chriſt, as it is poſſible the Followers of the *Lamb* can attain unto on this Side of Heaven: Then will the Church come by *the Unity of the Faith, and the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the Meaſure of the Stature of the Fulneſs of Chriſt*, Eph. iv. 13.

VI. *There ſhall be no Night there, and they had no need of the Candle, neither of the Light of the Sun, for the Lord God giveth them Light.* Theſe Words differ little from what we had, *Chap.* xxi. 23. there it reſpects the *City*, here the *Inhabitants.* In both there is a ſtated Oppoſition to the Condition of *Babylon*, of which we read, *Chap.* xviii. 23. We had *Night* explained before, *Chap.* viii. 12. where I proved it ſignifies Adverſity, as theſe Words of *Amos* confirm, *Amos* v. 8. *He maketh the Day dark with Night*; and more clearly by *Micah*, Chap. iii. 6. *Night ſhall be unto you, that ye ſhall not have a Viſion; and it ſhall be dark unto you, that ye ſhall not divine; and the Sun ſhall go down over the Prophets, and the Day ſhall be dark over them.* So that here we have a gracious Promiſe they ſhould never be deſtitute of the Ordinances, but ſhould have them in Plenty, Purity and Peace. The reſt of the Words are explained in the Places quoted.

VII. *They ſhall reign for ever and ever.* We can as little conclude from this Clauſe, that all is to be meant of Heaven, as from the reſt. 'Tis true, it proves, that the *Thouſand Years Reign* of the Saints will not put an End to their Happineſs; for after their Enemies are deſtroyed, as we heard, *Chap.* xx. 9. they will be eternally happy in the compleat Enjoyment of God and Chriſt, to all the Ages of Eternity. Of the Nature of this Reign we had Occaſion to ſpeak on *Chap.* xx. 4. and other Places there mentioned.

Thus I have followed the Threed of this Prophecy as cloſly as my ſhallow Capacity could reach, and called in the Auxiliaries of the *old Prophets*, in whoſe Language we find our Apoſtle commonly ſpeaking; which, I hope all will own, is a more ſure Way of inveſtigating theſe Myſteries, than any Help can be found from the *Grecian* and *Roman* Hiſtories. I cannot ſay I have hit the preciſe Meaning of the Spirit in the ſeveral Parts of this obſcure Portion of Scripture, more than many others have done before me, and from many of whom I found myſelf obliged to differ: The Weight of my Reaſons, determining me ſo to do, I have fairly diſcovered. If this Hint ſhall excite others of more Penetration to undertake this Task, and not ty themſelves to any Scheme, we may hope at length to have this *valuable Piece* of *Holy Writ* made more plain and intelligible, for the Comfort and Edification of the Saints.

The

The CONCLUSION.

THE Subject-matter of this Prophecy is of ſuch Events, as no Creature could think of till they were revealed; and even when revealed, the Particulars are ſo ſurpriſingly ſtrange, that they might ſtagger the Faith of any Reader or Hearer: Therefore God is at more than ordinary Pains, 1. To eſtabliſh the Truth of this whole Book, to *v.* 10. 2. To engage to the Obſervation thereof, to *v.* 16. 3. To guard this Prophecy, yea, and the whole Scriptures, from all Violence, by Additions, Mutilations or Alterations, to the Cloſe.

The firſt Branch of the Concluſion is the Eſtabliſhment of the Truth of the whole Prophecy, to *v.* 10. which is done by four ſeveral Evidences, and a Matter of Fact appended thereto. Theſe we ſhall conſider in ſo many diſtinct Sections of the Text, with Explication.

6 And he ſaid unto me, Theſe Sayings are faithful and true: ——

Here we have, 1. The Witneſs. 2. The Teſtimony he exhibites.

1. The Witneſs, *He ſaid unto me.* We heard of this *Angel*, Chap. xxi. 1. Some indeed would have this *Angel* to be another, but they cannot tell who: However, ſeeing he is not called *another*, nor any Thing advanced can give the leaſt Ground to believe he is not the *ſame*, we ſhould be modeſt in our Aſſertions. Beſides, it is reaſonable to think this *Angel*, after he had honoured our *Prophet* with theſe great *Viſions*, ſhould confirm his Narrative when he had done, and avouch the Truth of the whole Prophecy, which we find he does in theſe moſt ſignificant Words, *viz.*

2. The Teſtimony, *Theſe Sayings are faithful and true.* We had theſe Words aſſerted of a *Perſon*, viz. *Chriſt*, *Chap.* xix. 11. *Chap.* iii. 14. *Chap.* xxi. 5. Here they are applied to *Words*. Some think it ſhould be rendered *Things*, becauſe they take this Teſtimony to belong to the *laſt* Viſion: But if we allow theſe Viſions to be the Emblems and Characters prefiguring the *Things* they expreſs, they may very properly be called *Words*; for they convey the Knowledge of the Thing by the *Eye* to the Mind, as Words do by the *Ear*, and ſo they may be called *viſible Words*. But why this Teſtimony ſhould be reſtricted to the *laſt* Viſion, I ſee not: I own, it is the moſt auguſt and comfortable amongſt them, and what the Accompliſhment of all the reſt makes Way for; ſo that this Viſion ſuppoſeth all the reſt to have come to paſs before, and conſequently the Confirmation of *this* muſt eſtabliſh all the *reſt*.

This Witneſs depones two Things about this Prophecy, 1. *Theſe Things are faithful*; which is what we have affirmed of the *Goſpel*, 1 Tim. i. 15. *This is a faithful Saying*, i. e. they are as *true* as *Goſpel*; and not only declares the Credibility thereof, but alſo that they are full of Comfort. 2. *Theſe Things are true*, in Oppoſition to *cunningly deviſed Fables*; as alſo in Oppoſition to the *ambiguous Oracles* of the *Heathen*, &c. which were ſo contrived, that, fall out what would, they could ſo interprete their *Reſponſes*, that the Event ſhould be found therein. But in this Prophecy we have a long and continued *Series* of Events ſucceeding one another, till all iſſue in the *Conſummation* of all Things: And that the Chain in all its Links will be moſt notable, and the Truth fully implement the Emblem, which ſhould commend it to us.

6 ——And the Lord God of the holy Prophets, ſent his Angel to ſhew unto his Servants the Things which muſt ſhortly be done.

We have the ſecond Teſtimony given to the Truth of this Prophecy, which is an Envoy from Heaven, ſent by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt to avouch the ſame. In this we have theſe Things notable;

1. From whom this Meſſenger came, *The Lord God of the holy Prophets.* Some Copies have it, *The Lord God of the Spirit of the Prophets.* We heard of the *Spirit of Prophecy*, Chap. xix. 10. which comes only from God: And while both are added together, it ſhews that not only the *Perſons*, but the *Office* of the *Prophets*, are under the Divine Conduct. Now, who this God of the Prophets is, we have clearly expreſt, *v.* 16. *Jeſus that ſent to teſtify theſe Things*: And while he is called *the God of the holy Prophets*, ſhews all the *old Prophets* to have been his *Miniſters* no leſs than the Apoſtle *John*; As alſo to aſſure us, theſe Viſions, or this Prophecy, were revealed to the *old Pro-*

phets, as well as to *John*: Yet we are not to think this is excluſive of the *Father* and *Holy Ghoſt*; for the Prophets no leſs ſpeak their Mind than the Mind of *Jeſus Chriſt*, Heb. i. 1. *God, who at ſundry Times, and in diverſe Manners, ſpake in Times paſt unto the Fathers by the Prophets.* We find alſo Prophecy aſcribed unto the Holy Ghoſt, *Joel* ii. 28. *I will pour out my Spirit upon all Fleſh, and your Sons and your Daughters ſhall propheſy.* So that all the *Three* Perſons of the *glorious Trinity* concur in the Communication of the Knowledge of theſe Things that are to come; which is one of the graveſt Arguments proving the Diſcoveries made to theſe holy Perſons to be nothing elſe, but the Reſult of that eternal *Concert* amongſt the *Perſons* of the *adorable Trinity*, of Events that ſhall fall out in Time.

2. The Envoy, or Ambaſſador, *an Angel.* We had this ſame Character, *Chap.* i. *v.* 1. and *v.* 16. of this *Chapter.* If it be the ſame *Angel* meant in all the three Places, will be hard to determine, and as hard to refuſe: It is true, we read not of any particular *Angel* imployed to communicate theſe notable Events to *John* in any other Place of this Prophecy, except theſe three; And we find other *Angels*, and more than one at other Times, ſpeaking with, and informing him of Matters. But if this was ſome Angel that waited on him from *firſt* to *laſt*, or ſome ſpecial *Angel* uſed by the *Redeemer* on particular Negotiations, I know not how to determine: Only it would ſeem this is not that Angel had ſhew'd unto him the new *Jeruſalem*, elſe he would have known him better than proſtrate himſelf in a Poſture of Worſhip before him. It is as groundleſs to believe this Angel had nothing elſe in Commiſſion than to aſſure *John* of the Truth of what Emblems the other Angels had repreſented to him; for he is called, *v.* 8. *The Angel which ſhewed me theſe Things.* This indeed ſeems to inſinuate, that, beſides the Part many other Angels had in the *Viſions*, there was ſome one *Angel* that had tended *John* in all the Steps thereof, whom he might not be ſo ſenſible of before; and that now he diſcovered himſelf upon the Back of all the Viſions, *John* might miſtake him for the Angel of the Covenant, and thereupon be betray'd to that Blunder we afterwards read of.

3. To whom he was ſent, *to his*, i. e. [God's] *Servants.* This is to be taken in the ſame Senſe with *Chap.* i. 1. and ſo it extends not only to *Apoſtles*, and other *Goſpel-Miniſters*, but to all *Believers*, who are frequently called *the Servants of God.* And, *v.* 16. they are deſigned *theſe in the Churches*: Yet will not this ſay, that that *Angel* did immediately reveal theſe Things to the Churches; but, as we have, *Chap.* i. 1. it was done for the Behoof and Benefit of the Churches, but immediately revealed to *John*, and by him communicate to the *Churches*, as we ſee he hath faithfully done.

4. The Embaſſy, *The Things which muſt ſhortly be done.* This Clauſe is rendered, *Chap.* i. 1. *Things which muſt ſhortly come to paſs.* But it is the ſame in the *Greek* in both Places, and no doubt muſt have the ſame Senſe. This *ſecond* Teſtimony declares to us, that this Prophecy is of the ſame Veracity and Authority with the other Prophecies in Scripture; for *the Lord God of the holy Prophets* had by his *Angel* expreſly homologate the ſame. And, as the moſt of Scripture-prophecies had their Accomment before in the moſt exact Manner; So it will fare with this, *Not one Jot thereof will fall to the Ground, till all be fulfilled.* And this we are called firmly to believe.

7 Behold, I come quickly. Bleſſed is he that keepeth the Sayings of the Prophecy of this Book.

This is the third Evidence of the Truth of this Prophecy, together with the Sum of the ſecond Part of the Concluſion naturally inferred from the Teſtimony.

1. The Evidence, *Behold, I come quickly.* We had the Expreſſion before, *Chap.* iii. 11. where we explained it: Only here it appears we ſhould take it in a more *extended* Senſe; Not either for *Mercy* or *Wrath* ſeparately, but for both: Nor is it to be meant of the Day of Judgment, tho' that alſo is comprehended therein. And the full Senſe ſeems to be, that he will come quickly, to implement all that is contained in this Prophecy. This to be ſure is the greateſt Evidence of the *Truth* thereof, that he is inſtantly to fall about the Accompliſhment thereof.

It is not to be doubted, from the Nature of the Teſtimony, but the Atteſter is our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; And it is further plain from *v.* 12, and 13. of this *Chapter.* It is no leſs evident this was a *Voice* without a *Viſion*; but the Words did ſufficiently diſcover the Speaker: So that Chriſt is here verifying the Teſtimony of the *two Angels* before-mentioned, which ſhews us they did not run unſent.

2. He ſubjoins to this Teſtimony an Anticipation of the Subſtance of the ſecond Part of the Concluſion, *Bleſſed is he that keepeth the Sayings of the Prophecy of this Book.*

This

This flows naturally from Chriſt's Teſtimony, that ſeeing he was on his Way to fulfil the ſame, it muſt unqueſtionably be the Duty of every one to notice and obſerve the Contents of the *Prophecy*; which if they do, it will turn to their *Advantage*; otherwiſe, if they neglect ſuch a neceſſary Duty, it will turn to their great *Loſs* and Hazard. We gave the Senſe of this Clauſe before, on *Chap.* i. 3.

8 And I John ſaw theſe Things, and heard them: ——

This is the fourth Evidence given by the Apoſtle *John*, which tho' in Appearance but an *humane Teſtimony*, yet in Reality is *Divine*, becauſe by a Perſon divinely inſpired; and the Witneſs of ſuch is ſufficient to ground our Faith. This Apoſtle often gives ſuch Teſtimonies, John i. 14. *We beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the only Begotten of the Father.* John xix. 35. *He that ſaw it bare Record, and his Record is true, and he knoweth that he ſaith true, that ye might believe.* Another Paſſage to the ſame Purpoſe, 1 *John* i. 1, 3. *That which was from the Beginning, which we have heard, which we have ſeen with our Eyes, which we have looked upon, and our Hands have handled of the Word of Life. That which we have ſeen and heard, declare we unto you.* So that, tho' the *Apoſtle* was not the *greateſt*, he is far from being a *contemptible* Witneſs; yea, 'tis through his *Credit* the other Evidences are advanced: He had his credential Letters from God in the moſt ample Form. This ſhould remove all Doubts and Suſpicions as to the whole Manifeſtation. And here he gives his Teſtimony in the moſt pointed Manner, 1. From his *Name*, and under his *Hand*, *I John*; this he did before, *Chap.* xxi. 2. for the Reaſons there given. 2. From the moſt proving of his Senſes, *Seeing* and *Hearing*, which were moſt *proper* and fit in this Caſe. If our Senſes could deceive us in ſuch manifeſt Facts, how were it poſſible we ſhould come to any tolerable Aſſurance of the moſt Occurrences of Life? This may put to the Bluſh the *fooliſh* Doctrine of the *Papiſts*, who, out of Regard to their Darling *Tranſubſtantiation*, have bankrupt the Credit of all our Senſes, contrary to the Example and Authority of the *beloved Apoſtle*.

8 ——And when I had heard and ſeen, I fell down to worſhip before the Feet of the Angel, which ſhewed me theſe Things.

9 Then ſaith he unto me, See *thou do it* not: For I am thy Fellow-ſervant, and of thy Brethren the Prophets, and of them which keep the Sayings of this Book; Worſhip God.

Here is a Matter of Fact, which ſhuts up the firſt Part of the Concluſion. We had a Paſſage to this Purpoſe, *Chap.* xix. 10. where the Words were explained: Here I only notice the Difference and Agreement betwixt this, and that Account of the Thing, in theſe Particulars; 1. The Offers made by the Apoſtle to worſhip the Angel, are expreſſed much the ſame Way, with this Difference: Here it is added, *which ſhewed me theſe Things*; which makes it plain this *Angel* is none of the Seven that had the *ſeven Vials*, but is rather to be that *One* mentioned, *Chap.* i. 1. This will not mar the Senſe given on the *Parallel*; and thoſe Words, *theſe Things*, ſeem to comprehend the whole Things in this Prophecy, called *Words* before, *v.* 6. This Angel, then, had ſhewn *John* the Contents of the ſeveral Emblems. The *Check* here, and *Chap.* xix. is the ſame, *See thou do it not.* (2.) As for the *Grounds* of this Check, they are much the ſame: Only before, the *Angel* ſaid, *I am of thy Brethren, which have*, or hold, *the Teſtimony of Jeſus*, and this *Teſtimony* is afterwards called *the Spirit of Prophecy*; Here it is ſaid, *I am of thy Brethren the Prophets*: This ſeems to be no material Difference, ſeeing all are *Prophets* who get the *Spirit of Prophecy*; and the rather that here we have an Addition we meet not with in the firſt, *of them which keep the Sayings of this Book*: We had this above, *v.* 7. From the Whole, I think, we may conclude, this was not one of the *elect Angels*, but one of the *Spirits of juſt Men made perfect*; The Characters cannot agree to a *proper Angel*, tho' the Deſignation *Angel*, as we have proven, may be given to others beſides that Part of the *intellectual Creation*, which comes under the Name *Angels*: Beſides, it is not prefixed in the former Paſſage, as here, *when I had heard and ſeen*; yet it is evident he had both *ſeen* and *heard*, Chap. xix. 7, 8, 9. This ſeems to make as little Difference.

The great Queſtion here is, *Whether theſe two Paſſages reſpect the ſame Fact, or if they be different Acts, and at ſeveral Times?* Some determine one Way, and ſome another: I ſhall therefore conſider what is ſaid on each Side.

Theſe who make them reſpect the *ſame Fact*, reaſon from the Likeneſs of the *Phraſes*, which indeed is very *great*; And that it is not preſumeable, the *holy Apoſtle*, having been ſo lately rebuked for this Miſtake, would have ſo quickly fallen into it again: Yet we know that the beſt of God's Saints have been oftner than once overtaken with the ſame Error; ſo that there ſeems to be little Force in that Argument, and as little in the former, ſeeing two Faults may be very like other in the Commiſſion, and that occaſion the Reprehenſions to be of a Piece. *Abraham* twice denied his Wife, and *Jehoſhaphat* twice joined with *idolatrous* Kings.

Theſe who make them *different* Facts, are at great Pains, but with little Succeſs, to find a Diſagreement in the Narratives, at leaſt what will infer a *Diverſity*; and from the pointed Order of the Hiſtory of the Facts, which makes them two diſtinct Acts. This is yet weaker; for we found the ſame Events in this Prophecy, twice related, and more differently than theſe here. Beſides, the moſt of theſe who incline to make them diverſe Acts, conſider not that thereby they undo their grand *Hypotheſis*; for they make that Viſion, *Chap.* xix. from *v.* 1. to 11. to reſpect the State of the Glorified, and this Paſſage in *Chap.* xxii. they refer to the ſame. Now, if they be Emblems of the *ſame* Thing, however *different* the Repreſentations be, yet this Fact muſt be the ſame; and hence they might find an auxiliary Reaſon to prove, that the ſame Thing is intended by both Viſions, becauſe this Matter of Fact is annexed to each of the Emblems.

I ſhall offer another Reaſon may be as cogent to prove them to be different Facts, as any Thing yet advanced, taken from the Difference betwixt the *Viſions* and their *Significations*, in the two Places where theſe Miſtakes of the Apoſtle are mentioned. That Viſion, mentioned *Chap.* xix. gives a Deſcription of the State of the Church under the *ſixth Vial*, before the final Deſtruction of *Babylon*, and when the Church was not advanced to her Height; whereas, what we have, *Chapters* xxi. and xxii. give an Account of the Condition of the Church after the compleat *Deſtruction* of that *Mother* of *Abominations*; and ſo the Truths of theſe Viſions are as different from other, as the *Emblems*, which will make the Facts to be different alſo: Nor do I ſee how, in this Caſe, both Paſſages can point at the ſame Fact; for an Anticipation in the firſt Narrative will not do, that being as plain and full as this, and both brought in in the very *Threed* of the *Prophecy*.

Beſides, taking it ſo, we have what may extenuate the Apoſtle's Eſcape here, as well as in the former: He heard his *Maſter's Voice*, v. 7. which he could not but know; and the firſt Thing he diſcovers, is this Angel, whom he might, as we find he did, miſtake for his Lord the ſame Way as above, and yet in neither be brought in guilty of the Crime of *Idolatry*, as many incline to think.

Hence we ſee what that exceeding Weight of Glory is, will be beſtowed upon the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect; it is ſo great and ſurpriſingly excellent, that even an Apoſtle was in Hazard to miſtake it for the Glory of Chriſt, whom he had ſeen transfigured on the holy Mountain.

The ſecond Part of the Concluſion reaches to *v.* 16. and contains four very ſtrong Arguments preſſing to the Conſideration and Obſervation of this Prophecy, each of which Reaſons furniſh one or mo Directions how we ſhould improve it. Theſe we ſhall take particular Notice of, in order as they ly.

10 And he ſaith unto me, Seal not the Sayings of the Prophecy of this Book: For the Time is at Hand.

To underſtand the Force and Tendency of this Argument, we are to conſider, 1. Who gave this Command. 2. The Command itſelf. 3. The Reaſon of it.

1. Who gave this Command: Some ſay, The *Angel* whom *John* deſigned to worſhip, becauſe he is the laſt Antecedent: But, we noted before, that Paſſage of *John*'s Carriage to the *Angel*, is but an appended Matter of Fact, ſubjoined to the Evidences of the Authority of this Prophecy; and it would ſeem more equal, that this Relative *He* be referred to the *Vouchers*, who had all depoſed in the Faithfulneſs of God made known in this Prophecy, and ſhould not be referred to that Acknowledgment made by the Prophet, which is plainly an interjected Purpoſe, and ſo the laſt of theſe Vouchers before the Apoſtle, is *our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. I own, *John* had received Orders ſometimes before from an *Angel*, to write, as *Chap.* xix. 9. yet it would do as well to imagine that that *Angel* was ſent to *John* from God with theſe Orders, and ſo ſtill the Command is from God. But, be that as it will, we are ſure ſuch Orders were much oftner given *John* immediately by God, *Chap.* i. 11, 19. *What thou ſeeſt, write in a Book.* It ſeems rea-

reaſonable alſo, that he who gave Licence to publiſh this Prophecy at the Beginning of the Viſion, ſhould confirm the ſame at the End. It would appear alſo, it was the Command of God that ordered him to ſeal up what was uttered by the *Trumpets*, Chap. x. 4. and here he diſcharges to *ſeal* the reſt of the Viſions. Which is,

2. The Command itſelf, *Seal not the Sayings of the Prophecy of this Book*; which I take to be the Reverſe of that Order given, *Chap.* x. He is not only allowed, but commanded, to publiſh the whole Viſions of this Book, except that of the *Trumpets*; and to write them in that Order he had ſeen and heard them, becauſe they were to fall out in the ſame Method: For there is plainly a *Meioſis* in the Words, *Seal them not*, *i. e.* Publiſh them, and that preſently, becauſe they were deſigned for the Uſe of the then Generation, as well as for what was to come. Nor do I think but more is included than all this, from the Collation of this Command with another in *Daniel*, Chap. xii. 4. *Shut up the Words, and ſeal the Book.* Yet the *Prophecies* of *Daniel* were both written and publiſhed, as well as this Prophecy of *John*; and therefore ſomewhat more muſt be comprehended here, but what, is not ſo eaſy to determine. Some tell us, This is an Order to our Prophet to put his Book in more plain Language than either the Prophets *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, &c. had conceived their *Prophecies* in: But it will be hard to make out this from the ſeveral *Prophecies*. Others think the Oppoſition is to be ſtated betwixt a Paſſage in *Iſaiah*, and this Command, *Iſa.* viii. 16. *Bind up the Teſtimony, and ſeal the Law among my Diſciples*; And here he is ordered to ſet his Prophecy abroad in the World. But then, what ſhall be ſaid as to *Daniel*, which *John* ſeems to have moſt in his Eye, as we will find afterwards? Beſides, *Iſaiah*'s Viſion was communicate to the *Diſciples*, i. e. to theſe endued with the ſaving Knowledge of God, as is generally owned: And we can ſay no more for this *Prophecy*, which was only committed to the *ſeven Churches of* Aſia, and did not come abroad in the World, till ſome Time after the Prophet's Deceaſe; and ſo there can be no Oppoſition here. That which I take to be the ſureſt Handle to unriddle this Expreſſion by, is the above-cited Paſſage of *Daniel*, where the Command runs, *Dan.* xii. 4. *Seal the Book, even to the Time of the End.* Which ſays plainly, it was the Will of God that that Prophecy of *Daniel* ſhould not be underſtood at that Time: Yet we hear nothing of *Daniel*'s ſealing the Book according to the Command of God, for we find him immediately imployed in the Contemplation of another Viſion, *v.* 5. Thereafter, God ſpeaks to the Prophet, and ſays, *v.* 9. *Go thy way*, Daniel, *for the Words are cloſed up and ſealed.* Whence 'tis evident, that not *Daniel*, but God himſelf, had ſhut up the Prophecy for ſome Time; and may be the ſame in Senſe as when it is ſaid, *Luke* xxiv. 6. *The Eyes of the Diſciples were holden, that they ſhould not know him.* So God was pleaſed, for holy Reaſons, to hold the Eyes of at leaſt that Generation, that they ſhould not underſtand *Daniel*'s Prophecy. Now, if we allow the contrary of this to be the Meaning here, as in all Reaſon we ought, then the Senſe of it is, The Churches ſhould inſtantly know, and underſtand the Scope and Deſign of this Prophecy; and that this *Spirit of Diſcerning* ſhould be from God, for the Comfort and Direction of the *Churches*. This was not found with Reſpect to the Prophecy of *Daniel*, which, however plain ſince, was underſtood but by a very few of the *Jews*, who are deſigned, *Such as waited for the Conſolation of* Iſrael.

If it be objected, This cannot be the Senſe of it; for the very different, yea, contrary Gloſſes given of this Portion of Scripture, plainly prove, that the Minds of Men, either of one Sort or other, are not inlightned to underſtand the true Meaning thereof, even to this Day.

I anſwer, This is falſe; for all the Expoſitors that ever wrote upon it, have agreed in in the greateſt and moſt notable Branches of this Prophecy; even many among the *Papiſts*, overcome with the Force of Truth, have join'd Iſſue, both with the *Ancients* who expounded this Prophecy before *Antichriſt* roſe, and with the *Proteſtants* who have written ſince his Decay. And in theſe principal Points, which are moſt material, all ſpeak with one Voice; as, (1.) That after the firſt Spring of the *Goſpel*, and when it ſhould march through the Earth, God would permit to riſe bitter Enemies againſt the ſame; And Satan would hound them forth, and direct them in their ſeveral Pieces of Enmity. And further, they all agree, that theſe Enemies are the *Heathens*, *Papiſts*, and *Mahometans*. It is true, there are great Differences among them, as to the Application of the proper Pieces of the Hiſtory: And ſome unlearned and unſtable Perſons have wreſted ſome Portions thereof, as they do alſo other Scriptures. (2.) All own that theſe *Enemies* of the Church were to riſe by *Degrees*, and would not come to their Height of either *Cruelty* or *Strength* at once, but by many and leiſurely Steps. (3.) When they were grown *great*, they would continue a long Time, and grievouſly vex the *little* Flock of Chriſt, both by *Force* and *Fraud*. (4.) That God would bring them down *gradually*, that both the Church and themſelves may be ſenſible of their

Declenſion, and at laſt he will utterly deſtroy them. (5.) That upon their *Ruin* the Church is to *advance*, and at Length be greater than ever her Enemies had been, and continue a long Time in that *proſperous State*. (6.) That at length ſome *Enemies* ſhall ariſe, either of the ſame or a different Shape, aſſiſted alſo by Satan, and very much hamper and ſtraiten the Church, yea, and bring her very low. (7.) That God will appear in a moſt remarkable Manner, and vindicate the Cauſe that is his own, by the Extirpation of his Enemies, and the *Liberation* of his Church. (8.) And finally, After all theſe will be the *Day of Judgment*.

All theſe Things were plainly deduced from the Words of this *Prophecy*, by theſe Worthies that flouriſhed in the *firſt Ages* of *Chriſtianity*, as is evident from their Monuments which have come to our Hands; tho' ſome of them are miſerably interpolate by *Papiſts*, who could not endure the State of their Church ſhould make all theſe great Men *Prophets*, and force themſelves to own they had the *black Mark* of the Beaſt. And no doubt, had we the Works of theſe who lived much about the Time of, or ſhortly after our *Apoſtle* had conſigned this Prophecy in the Hands of the *ſeven Churches*, but we ſhould find them ſpeaking the ſame Things: It is true, they could not tell us, whom the *three perſecuting Horſes* would be, eſpecially who were ſignified by the *laſt two*, without a new Revelation, no more than we can tell who *Gog* and *Magog* will be; Tho' we are ſure, there will be two Enemies, as like the *Gog* and *Magog* mentioned in the Old Teſtament Prophets, as the preſent Enemies are like *Old Babylon*. Our Light into the *firſt* Part of this Prophecy is now clearer by the *Annals*, both civil and ſacred, of ancient Times, whereby we are aſſiſted to point at theſe *Powers* that conſtitute the Man of Sin; yet the *Thing* was no Secret before.

3. The *Reaſon* of this Command, *For the Time is at Hand*. This is certainly of the ſame Signification with what he had, *Chap.* i. 1. *Muſt ſhortly come to paſs*: And is the contrary of what we have in *Daniel*, Chap. viii. 26. *Shut thou up the Viſion, for it ſhall be for many Days*. So that, if it was a good Reaſon to conceal *Daniel*'s Viſion, becauſe it was long to its Accompliſhment; it muſt be as good here, for the ſpeedy propaling of this Viſion, that the Time is at Hand. We had the ſame Expreſſion, *Chap.* i. 3. where it is explained.

It is evident, this Reaſon calls loudly to every one of us, ſeriouſly to conſider this *Book*, left open for that very End, that it may be pondered. If we would give ourſelves to this Exerciſe, it would ſtrengthen Faith, when weak; confirm a ſtaggering Hope, and blow up a languiſhing Love: We would thereby get a beautiful View of the Providence of God in the Management of his Church, and be convinced that all Things work together *for Good to them who love God, to them who are called according to his Purpoſe*.

This gives Ground to believe, that *Popery* is a Limb of *Antichriſt*, who diſcharge the Reading of the Scripture, and this Portion thereof among the reſt; for, were the People allowed Acceſs to the Word of God, the Falſhood of their Doctrines would appear, and from theſe Marks and Evidences, that their *idolatrous Church* is a Part of the *Beaſt*: Their Ignorance of this, whether affected or not, makes them deaf to all the Calls of God, and is a ſhrewd Token they are hardned in order to Deſtruction.

11 He that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous ſtill; and he that is holy, let him be holy ſtill.

This is the ſecond *Argument*, the Senſe whereof does in a great Meaſure depend on its Connexion: And *this* not being agreed on, makes the *other* more uncertain; for, were we to take the Words abſtractly, and as they ly in themſelves, without reſpect to what goes before, or follows after, we would meet with no Difficulty.

Some make them introductory to *v.* 12. which they think ſpeaks of the *laſt Judgment*, and that here, in order to that, there is a ranging of the ſeveral Sorts of Perſons to be judged: But then, if the next Verſe do not particularly concern the *general Judgment*, this Notion muſt fall of Courſe; this muſt be referred till we come to explain and vindicate that Text afterwards. Beſides, I ſhewed before, the whole of this Concluſion concerns the whole of the *Prophecy* from the *firſt* Branch; and the very Reading of the *third*, ſhews it to be of the ſame Extent; nor can I ſee any Reaſon, why the *ſecond*, or middlemoſt, ſhould not be underſtood the ſame Way. Again, theſe make the 10. *v.* to be the Speech of an *Angel*, and not of *Chriſt*; which we have at Length diſproven.

Others

Others tye this to *v.* 10. and make it the *Anticipation* of an Objection againſt it; whether it be ſpoken by our Lord, or an *Angel*. The Objection they frame to this Purpoſe, *viz*, *The publiſhing of this Prophecy may be of dangerous Conſequents, to harden the Wicked againſt the People of God, when they apply to themſelves the Viſions of the Dragon, and Beaſts; and believe all the Wickedneſs propheſied of them, to be within their Commiſſion, and that they are bound down by ſome fatal Neceſſity to perpetrate all theſe Pieces of monſtrous Cruelty; and thereby diſcourage the People of God, who may flouriſh at the ſame Time with theſe abandoned Wretches in any Period of the World.* To which they think this comes in as a very ſuitable and comfortable Anſwer, and contains a Permiſſion without Approbation, from God, to the Enemy; but a *Promiſe* in Favours of the *Elect*, that they ſhall, notwithſtanding, perſevere and grow as faſt in Godlineſs, as the other does in Sin: And therefore theſe great Truths of God muſt not be concealed; for, tho' the Enemy therefrom may encourage himſelf in Wickedneſs, yet it is chiefly deſigned for the Direction and Comfort of God's People, and will confirm them in the Exerciſe of *Faith*, *Patience*, and *Holineſs*, from the Hope of what is coming. This is very ſmooth, and therefore generally gone in with; tho' I find ſome of the moſt obſerving, after Examination, unſatisfied therewith, and chooſe rather faintly to go in with the former Opinion: But we have a much more full and clear Comfort to the Church of God, under the *fifth Seal*, Chap. vi. 9. &c. after which there is no Need of any ſuch Anticipation here; beſides, even this allowed, it cannot agree to the whole *Prophecy*, as all the Parts of this Concluſion ſhould do, to hit the Scope of the *Spirit* therein.

I take this Verſe, then, to be a *ſtrong* Reaſon moving to the Obſervation of this whole *Prophecy*; and is a *Prophecy* itſelf, uttered by *our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. I ſhewed the firſt Argument, *v.* 10. to be an Alluſion to two Paſſages in the Prophecy of *Daniel*, where the Book was ſealed, *Dan.* xii. 9. There is indeed a great Difference, but that will not hinder an Alluſion, as we ſaw before: And I think this yet more plainly to point at the Words of the *Angel* unto *Daniel*, Chap. xii. 10. *Many ſhall be purified, and made white, and try'd; but the Wicked ſhall do wickedly, and none of the Wicked ſhall underſtand, but the Wiſe ſhall underſtand.* Now the Affinity betwixt theſe *two Verſes* in *Daniel*, and the two under our Conſideration, is very obvious; yet no Expoſitor ever thought that *Dan.* xii. 10. to be the Anticipation of an Objection might be moved againſt *v.* 9. and as little can it take Place here. Beſides, this breaks the imaginary Connexion betwixt this and *v.* 12. for in *Daniel*, the 10 *v.* is changed to *v.* 9. and is nothing a-kin to what follows.

That Paſſage in *Daniel* is a plain *Prophecy*, tho' in prophetick Terms of the Condition of the *Elect*, notwithſtanding of the ſealing of the Book, becauſe under God's ſpecial Care; As alſo a *Prophecy* of the Condition and Exerciſe of the Wicked at the ſame Time: Which is exactly the Caſe here, only the Book is not ſealed; and therefore we may take this to be a *Prophecy* of the State and Exerciſe of the Wicked, tho' the Book be *open*; as alſo a Prophecy of the State and Exerciſe of the Elect, all that Time, and this alſo in a *prophetical Phraſe*; for nothing is more ordinary in Scripture, than to expreſs Prophecies by the *Imperative* for the *Future*, as may be known even by the *Engliſh Reader*, by the prefixed Particle *let*, which, if turned to *ſhall*, would make it a Prediction.

But we would look a little further into the Words themſelves, which, like *Rebekah*'s Womb, repreſent to us *Twins* ſtruggling, *Gen.* xxv. 22. and theſe *two Nations*; yea, they are comprehenſive of all the Nations of the Earth: The firſt is the true *Eſau*, the other *Jacob*, or the true *Iſrael*, whom we would a little view, as they are characterized in the Text. They are both advanced in the ſinglar Number, with the prefixed *Article* of Diſtinction; the one is *Antichriſt*, the other *Chriſt myſtical*; the one *Babylon*, the other *new Jeruſalem*. We begin with the

I. In the Beginning of the Verſe, whom we have deſcribed by two black Characters, and two as bad practical Qualities propheſied of him.

1. The Characters are, 1. *The Unjuſt*, by Way of Eminency, for *Antichriſt* is called *the Man of Sin*. The Word properly ſignifies one that is *injurious*, or that does Harm to others without Cauſe; for that Man is highly unjuſt: This is notably verified of *Antichriſt*, whoſe great Work is, like his Father the *Devil*, to be a *Murderer* and *Calumniator*. This Character was illuſtrate from what was ſaid, *Chap.* xiii. 2. *The Filthy*, the Word ſignifies the ſordid Matter flowing from an inveterate *Ulcer*, and is well known by the *Sons of Medicine* in many Caſes, but always uſed in an evil Senſe; and ſometimes uſed to expreſs the abominable Emanation from a moſt ſinful Cauſe. We heard before of *Fornication* in a ſpiritual Senſe; this is another Character of it, as to its infecting Effects, and proves

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him to be *idolatrous*: This ſays, The Diagnoſticks of *Babylon* are *Perſecution* and *Idolatry*.

2. The practical *Qualities* propheſied of him, and are much of the ſame Nature with his *Characters*, yea, the ſame Principles and Powers exerted; 1. He will be *Unjuſt*: This fiery Temper of his will not be concealed, but it will break out in all Manner of Hoſtilities, as we heard on *Chapters* xii. & xiii. This War is of as old ſtanding as Sin. 2. He will be *Filthy*: It is not a latent Malady, that may kill the Perſon before it diſcover itſelf to others; for it kills others, while the Perſon remains till the *juſt Judgment of God* overtake him. Hence ſee the Difference betwixt *natural* and *ſpiritual* Uncleanneſs; the *firſt* may propagate the Sore, but weakens the Perſon; the *other*, while it ſpreads its Contagion, ſtrengthens the Author; yet is he ſtill making ripe for the Cup of God's Wrath.

It is added to both, *ſtill*, ἔτι. I am very eaſy about its Signification: Sometimes it points at a Continuance in the ſame State and Exerciſe, as in the Mind of our Tranſlators here; at other Times it ſignifies an Increaſe, as, *Mat.* xxvi. 65. *What Need have we of more Witneſſes?* and in many other Places. Both is true: *Antichriſt* never remitted of either his Cruelty or Idolatry, tho' ſometimes he is ſo chain'd as not be able to accompliſh his Deſigns; which verifies the Words of the Apoſtle, 2 *Tim.* iii. 13. *Evil Men and Seducers wax worſe and worſe, deceiving, and being deceived.*

II. The next we have in the other Part of the Verſe, which I take to be the juſt Character of Chriſt's Church in all Ages; where we view, as in the former, the Characters and practical Qualities.

1. The *Characters*. 1. *The Righteous*, with the *prepoſitive Article* as before, which ſays the Flock of Chriſt are the only *Righteous*; It is the perfect Reverſe of the former, and ſignifies the doing of Righteouſneſs, as this ſame *Apoſtle* explains it, 1 *John* iii. 7. *He that doth Righteouſneſs, is righteous.* In this the Church is deſcribed from her Practice, wherein ſhe imitates God, who is deſigned righteous from his Works in the forecited Place. 2. *The Holy*; this is her Diſpoſition, and points at one that is ſeparate from the World, and the Men thereof, both in their Affections and the Diſcoveries thereof: And is the Reverſe of *Filthy*; ſo that they are chaſt in a moſt ſpiritual and extenſive Senſe, *Chap.* xii. 1.

2. What is propheſied thereof, alſo in two: It is to be noticed here, tho' the *Verbs* be in the *Imperative* as the former, yet are they of the *paſſive Voice*, and ſo differ from them, and therefore ſhould be differently rendred: The 1*ſt*, *Let him be righteous*; originally, *Let him be juſtified.* Yet a great many are afraid to admit this, leſt the Papiſts ſhould get too much Ground; becauſe then it would ſeem to caſt up, that doing Righteouſneſs is the Ground of Juſtification. We have another Text, *Jam.* ii. 24. *Ye ſee how by Works a Man is juſtified*: Yet none of the Reformed have found great Work to put theſe Sons of *Antichriſt* to Silence about it, and it will be much more eaſy here; for the Speech is not of *Juſtification* in a proper Senſe, and in the Sight of God, upon a Perſon's firſt cloſing with Chriſt; but it is to be underſtood of the after-approving of himſelf in the Sight of both God and Man, declaring an upright and holy Life, flowing from Faith, to be acceptable in the Sight of God: So the *Publican* is ſaid, *Luke* xviii. 14. *to go down to his Houſe juſtified*, becauſe of his humble Supplication: In the ſame Senſe it is ſaid, *Luke.* vii. 35. *Wiſdom is juſtified of her Children.* So that the Senſe is, Theſe whoſe Practice is oppoſite to that of *Babylon*, will be acceptable to God at all Times. 2. *Let him be holy*, or rather, *Let him be ſanctified*, i. e. he ſhall be aſſiſted and directed to go on, and make Progreſs in the Way of Holineſs. From the Turn of Expreſſion it appears, all the Evil of the Wicked is from themſelves, and in themſelves, and therefore it is expreſſed *actively*; whereas all the Good in God's People, is of God, and by him communicate to them, and therefore it is expreſſed *paſſively*. *Still*, ἔτι, is added here alſo, to ſhew the *Godly* would not only perſiſt and continue, but grow and increaſe in all Graces, *Prov.* iv. 18. *The Path of the Juſt is a ſhining Light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect Day.*

In theſe then we have a lively Deſcription of the true Church of God in all Ages: They have a lively Faith in Chriſt Jeſus, juſtified by good Works; They are holy in Heart, Worſhip and Converſation; They perſevere and grow in all theſe, and ſo are as acceptable to God as their Enemies are abominable.

This therefore is a very forcible Argument for *conſidering* and *improving* this *Prophecy*, and all the Sayings thereof; for, by ſo doing, we will be let in to the Knowledge of the Myſtery of Iniquity, which will bring eternal Ruin and Miſery upon all who go in with the Meaſures thereof. We may diſcover this *Beaſt*, either by its *Leopard's Spots, Bear's Feet, Lion's Mouth*, or *Dragon's Power*, by its *War with the Saints*, the *Cup of the Wine of her Fornication*, its *glorious Trapings* that delude the World,

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it's many *Horns* imploy'd againſt the little Flock of Chriſt; and hence be engaged to come out of that *Babylon*, for ſhe will never mend, being given up of God. Here alſo we will ſee the true Characters of the *Bride* the *Lamb's Wife*, *Clothed with the Sun*, *crowned with the Stars*, *having the Moon under her Feet*; That ſhe is the ſpecial Care of God in all her Conditions; is waſhed in the Blood of the *Lamb*, and thence becomes white and beautiful, thro' the Comelineſs Chriſt puts upon her; all her Ornaments are *ſpiritual*; ſhe is of a Piece both without and within, and is bleſſed with the Promiſes of Grace to perſevere and grow in the Faith of *Chriſt*, and Practice of *Godlineſs*: And by all theſe, be engaged to join ourſelves unto that City, whoſe Original is Heaven, whoſe Security is the Blood and Faithfulneſs of God, and whoſe End will be eternal Salvation.

12 And behold, I come quickly, and my Reward is with me, to give every Man according as his Work ſhall be.

13 I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the Firſt and the Laſt.

The *third* Argument preſſing the Conſideration and Obſervation of the Words of this Prophecy, is from the *Glory* will redound to Chriſt therefrom; and ſeems to be of a Piece with what we find recorded by this ſame Apoſtle of his great Maſter, *John* xiii. 19. *Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to paſs ye may believe that I am he.* The Scope of this Expreſſion was certainly to engage their Attention to what he had then diſcovered to them, and to compare Chriſt's Words with the *Event*; and from both, to have their Faith confirmed that he is *true God*, and knows all Things. Yet there our Lord had only foretold one Event, *viz.* the Treachery of *Judas*, one of the Twelve; but in this Prophecy he foretold all the notable Events ſhould fall out to the End of Time, declaring alſo what Hand his Providence was to have in them; all which will undoubtedly contribute the more to his *Glory*, and fix his Saints in the *Faith* of this, *That all Power in Heaven and in Earth is committed unto him.* This Senſe will caſt up more clearly, that we view the ſeveral Parts of the Text; Where we have, 1. A Promiſe of his Coming. 2. An Account of his Proviſion. 3. The Deſign. 4. The Amount of all theſe, *viz.* the Diſcovery of himſelf.

1. The Promiſe of his Coming, *Behold, I come quickly.* This we had, *v.* 7. as a Ground of the Truth of this *Prophecy*: Here it is a Motive to the Obſervation thereof; and indeed it is forcible *both Ways*, particularly in this, in regard he is on his Way to accompliſh all that is contained therein, from *firſt* to *laſt*, therefore we ſhould give the more diligent Heed, leſt, if we be inadvertant, theſe grand Events may overtake us, and find us unprepared; for it is a true Saying, *Promonitus premunitus.* I ſee not how this can be applied to the *laſt Judgment*, becauſe many notable Things are ſall out which will be introductory thereto, and ſome of them are over already; and in all of theſe Chriſt may be ſaid to come, either in *Wrath*, as he threatned againſt the Church of *Epheſus*, Rev. ii. 5. or in *Mercy*, as he promiſed to the Church of *Philadelphia*, Rev. iii. 11. It is true, we ſhould not exclude the laſt Coming, ſeeing the Concluſion bears a Reſpect to the whole Parts of the Prophecy, which is alſo owned by a great many learned Expoſitors.

2. An Account how he is provided, *My Reward is with me.* It needs be no Diſpute whether this Word *Reward* ſignifies only conſtant Wages paid from Time to Time, as by the Day, Week, Month, *&c.* or if it ſignifies only the laſt and final Retribution given to every one; for I find it taken both Ways: In the firſt Senſe this is one plain Inſtance, 1 *Tim.* v. 18. *The Labourer is worthy of his Reward.* In the other we have it alſo, *Matth.* v. 12. *Great is your Reward in Heaven.* Neither of theſe Meanings will expede the Difficulty which lies in the Senſe of *Reward*, joined with the *appropriative* Pronoun *my*, *My Reward.* Some contend, It ſhould be taken *actively* for the Reward given by Chriſt. This no doubt muſt make a Part of the Senſe of the Words, as is evident from the next Clauſe; yet this Expreſſion ſeems to have ſomewhat further in it will be the Ground of that. This will be plain from the Uſe of this Clauſe in Scripture; for I nowhere find the Word *Reward*, with a *Poſſeſſive*, *my*, *thy*, *his*, taken *actively* in Scripture, but where it is controverted. Many a Time we have it where there can be no Debate, and then it is underſtood *paſſively*, as, 1 *Cor.* ix. 18. *What is my Reward?* i. e. the Reward I expect and am to get. 1 *Tim.* v. 18. *The Labourer is worthy of his Reward*, i. e. a Reward to be given him. *Col.* ii. 18. *Let no Man beguile you of your Reward*, i. e. the promiſed Reward. Some Paſſages from the old Prophets may be helpful here, *Iſa.* xl. 10. *Behold, the Lord God ſhall come with a*

ſtrong Hand, and his Arm ſhall rule for him: Behold, his Reward is with him, and his Work before him. Chap. lxii. 11. *Behold, thy Salvation cometh; behold, his Reward is with him, and his Work before him.* It is generally thought our Text is fetched from theſe Places; and it is owned by all, they ſpeak not of the laſt and general Rewards and Puniſhments: Yea, and ſome think it is to be meant of Chriſt's Reward, or that which the Father promiſed him, and ſo it is nothing elſe but what that Crown beſtowed upon him, *Chap.* vi. 2. is the Emblem of; for he comes to conquer, which is the Reward of his meritorious Life and Death. The formal Reaſon we find given of this, is his Mediation Work, *John* v. 27. *He hath given him Authority alſo to execute Judgment, becauſe he is the Son of Man.* Which is what we have in other Words by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. liii. 10, 11. *When thou ſhalt make his Soul an Offering for Sin, he ſhall ſee his Seed, he ſhall prolong his Days, and the Pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his Hand: He ſhall ſee the Travail of his Soul, and be ſatisfied.* This Reward then is all that the Everlaſting *Father* engaged and promiſed to the Son of his Love, in the Accompliſhment of the great Work of *Redemption*, till all the Elect ſhould be gathered in. This *Reward* is ſaid *to be with him*, becauſe he was fully furniſhed with all Things neceſſary to bring theſe great Events about, whether as to the *reſtraining* or *confounding* his Enemies, or as to the *Enlargement* and *Protection* of his Church and People; yet all this while it will not hinder but that the active Reward be compriſed here alſo, which we find mentioned in other Places of Scripture, *Rom.* ii. 6. *He will render to every Man according to his Deeds*; becauſe the *active* flows immediately from the *paſſive, He hath got Power over all Fleſh, that he might give eternal Life to as many as the Father hath given him.* He has lodged in him all theſe Qualifications, as *Authority* and *Power*, in the Exerciſe of which, he diſcovers his untainted Holineſs, Faithfulneſs, Love, &c. which are needful in the Adminiſtration of the *Mediatory* Kingdom from firſt to laſt: All which Perfections are glorified by the Church's conſidering and keeping the Words of this Prophecy. And further, it will ſtrengthen their Faith of the Truth, and their Patience in waiting for the Accompliſhment of theſe foretold Events.

3. The Deſign, or the End of his Coming ſo furniſhed, *To give every Man as his Work ſhall be.* We had two Parallels to this, *Chap.* xx. 12. and 13. only there it was confined to the laſt and *general Judgment*, here it is to be extended to the whole of Chriſt's Management, and ſhews it will be with the utmoſt Exactneſs and Equality. Tho' at the firſt Steps of his Work his Deſign is not ſo obvious, yet it will afterwards caſt up to have nothing truly good to his *Enemies*, or truly evil to his *Friends*; which may be Matter of Terror to the *one*, and Comfort to the *other*. This alſo calls on all of us, accurately to conſider not only the more general Occurrences and Steps of Divine Conduct, but alſo theſe that are more private and perſonal; and we will find a perfect Harmony betwixt the Nature of our Works and God's, whence we may be directed to eſcape theſe Things that are offenſive to him, and imploy ourſelves in theſe Things that are well-pleaſing to him.

4. The Amount of all this, even the Manifeſtation of himſelf, *v.* 13. *I am Alpha and Omega*, &c. We had all theſe before, and explained them; the firſt two, *Chap.* i. 8. *Chap.* xxi. 6. the laſt of the three, *Chap.* i. 11, and 17. No doubt they are to have the ſame Senſe here as in theſe Places. All of them concur to eſtabliſh the Divinity of our Lord and Saviour, and to manifeſt his Divine and incommunicable Perfections, particularly his *Eternity, Immutability, Infinite Power, Wiſdom* and *Faithfulneſs*, the Diſplays of which will be no ſmall Reward for all the Labour and Pains we can be at in reading, and keeping the Words of this Prophecy, and encourage us to view the Events, either paſt or to come.

14 Bleſſed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have Right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the Gates into the City.

15 For without are Dogs, and Sorcerers, and Whoremongers, and Murderers, and Idolaters, and whoſoever loveth and maketh a Lie.

This firſt Argument, preſſing to the Obſervation of this Prophecy, is taken from the Advantages of keeping the Commandments of Chriſt, and from the Nature and State of theſe who do not keep them.

It is queſtioned, Whoſe theſe Words are? Many think them to be the Words of Chriſt the laſt Speaker, and think the Alteration of the Perſon, from the *firſt* to the *third*,

third, will not hinder; for they tranſlate αὐτῆ *its*, and not *his*, and ſo the *Antecedent* is *Book*, v. 10. and the Senſe is, as if Chriſt had ſaid, *Happy are they that obſerve the Directions and Commands in this Book*: And think this is added here, becauſe many, who readily received all the reſt of the holy Scripture, ſtrain'd at this, as either more uncertain, or leſs uſeful; which here he removes by this promiſed Bleſſedneſs. They further remark, That this Declaration of Bleſſedneſs is but *ſeven* Times mentioned in this *Prophecy*; and of theſe 'tis thrice aſcribed to theſe that *conſider* and *keep the Words of this Prophecy*, and ſo it makes much for the Credit of this Book. Others again take the Words to be added by the inſpired Apoſtle who was the laſt Voucher of the the Truth of this Prophecy, *v.* 8. ſo here he adds the laſt Reaſon for a conſcientious Improvement of the Contents thereof; and then the Relative *His* refers to the laſt Antecedent, *I am Alpha*, &c. They are the rather of this Mind, that that, *Chap.* i. 3. (where we have the firſt Declaration to this Purpoſe) is the Words of the *Prophet*, and that he had ſufficient Ground to renew it here, becauſe our Lord had the ſame in Subſtance, *v.* 7. of this Chapter. Either Senſe may paſs, tho' I own the ſecond ſeems more probable: But both prove the Prophecy of Divine Authority.

Some think, they make the Difference greater, when they aſſert in the firſt Senſe, there is but one Commandment, *viz. Keep the Sayings of this Prophecy*: But the ſecond is more extenſive, and reaches to all the Precepts of the Goſpel, and to be the ſame in Comprehenſion with that, *John* xiv. 15. *If ye love me, keep my Commandments.* Yet, even ſo, I cannot think the Difference is great; for, if we view the ſeveral Precepts given to the ſeven Churches, the many other Calls, Expoſtulations, Exhortations, and Rebukes given under the *Seals*, *Trumpets*, and *Vials*, we will find them ſo comprehenſive, as contain the Subſtance of the *Goſpel* in all its Parts; Tho' ſtill I am of the Mind, as we have it here, it immediately reſpects the Contents of this Prophecy. We are next to ſee how he proves this Topick, *viz.* that they are bleſſed who keep his Commandments. This is done two different Ways: 1. From the Benefits accrew to the Obſervers. 2. From the Nature and State of them that do not obſerve.

I. From the Benefits they have who keep his Commands: Theſe are two;

1*ſt*, They have a notable Property or Right, *That they may have Right to the Tree of Life.* We ſpoke of *the Tree of Life*, v. 2. and ſhewed it ſignifies Chriſt; yet does not this clear the Difficulty, becauſe here we read of *the Right to the Tree of Life*; and this ſeems to be placed in Obedience, which many are fond of, and eſpecially ſuch as have leaſt Inclinations to obey. Others again are ſtraitned to how to evade this Thruſt; and therefore, by keeping of the Commandments of Chriſt, underſtand Faith, becauſe we have this called *his* Commandment, by this ſame Apoſtle, 1 *John* iii. 23. *This is his Commandment, that we ſhould believe on the Name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and love one another.* Yet it is plain they labour under a double Miſtake, 1. That this is the Command of Chriſt, for it is plainly the Command of the *Father*; yet I do not refuſe but the *Son* has emitted the very ſame Command, and ſo it may be called the Commandment of both the *Father* and the *Son*: But ſtill the Quotation is impertinent to this Place, where we read not of one, but of many Commandments. 2. There is ſtill a greater Miſtake here in this Senſe, *viz.* That the Exerciſe of Faith founds a *Right* to *Jeſus Chriſt*, as the Tree of Life; which is ſuch an unwarry and ill-guarded Expreſſion, as none ſhould admit: For, let us take *Right* in what Senſe we will, *Faith* can never give us *Right* or Title to Chriſt, it being that Grace by which an elect Soul is really united to Chriſt, and ſo it gives Poſſeſſion, which muſt follow upon the Title. The Elect have a twofold Right to Chriſt, but neither Faith nor Obedience make any of them; the firſt is the *Father's Donation* of them to Chriſt; this founds Chriſt's Right in them, and ſecures their Approach to him: But this is not known, till the ſecond, *viz.* the *Father's effectual drawing* them by the *Word* of the *Goſpel*, acompanied with the *holy Spirit*, diſcovering their abſolute Need of a Saviour, and invincibly moving them to cloſe with him by Faith, and then they are united to the *Tree of Life*; ſo that this cannot found the Right in the Text.

Others again think, the Key of this Difficulty is in the Word ἐξουσία, which they contend is not always to be rendred *Authority*, as it moſt ordinarily ſignifies; or *Right*, as it is tranſlated in this Text, and elſewhere, *Rom.* ix. 21. *Hath not the Potter Power over the Clay?* But, that here it ſhould be rendred *Liberty*, as we find it elſewhere, 1 *Cor.* viii. 9. *Take Heed this Liberty of yours be not a ſtumbling Block.* 1 Cor. ix. 4. *Have we not Power to eat and to drink?* &c. Yet even in this there muſt be a Notion of *Right*; for *Liberty* without *Right* is plain *Licentiouſneſs*. Theſe make this point at the full Acceſs, and Child-like Freedom of the *Lord's People* through Chriſt in all their Approaches, which no doubt is a very diſtinguiſhing Privilege. However, it is choking to ſome, that this is founded on Obedience, yet not ſo much as in the former Senſe,

becauſe it is ſaid, *John* ix. 31. *If any Man be a Worſhipper of God, and doth his Will, him he heareth.* And ſo they own that this notable Privilege is founded on a Conformity to the Will of God, flowing from Faith in a Mediator. Others are diſſatisfied with this, becauſe they think ἔσαι is in the Future, and therefore this Privilege is to be carried beyond Time, and ſo to be meant of the Condition of the Saints in Heaven: Yet this ſeems rather to *cut*, than *looſe* the Difficulty; Beſides, I ſhewed on *Rev.* ii. 7. that Believers even in Time have Acceſs to the *Tree of Life*, that is, they ſhall have Communion with Chriſt; nor is it denied by any.

'Tis hard to offer any Thing more plauſible than theſe; yet, with Submiſſion, I think, the Conſideration of the Verb ἔσαι may help us out with it. 'Tis commonly thought to come from εἰμι *ſum*, which in the *third* Perſon of the *ſingular Number* of the *Future* is ἐσεται; and by the Figure *Syncope* is read ἔσαι: Yet, it is alſo true, it may be fetched from ἕω *to ſit* or *put on*, and in the *Paſſive* ἕσμαι; and the *Preterit* in the *third Perſon* of the *ſingular Number* is ἕσαι, he is *eſtabliſhed* or *clothed*. As for the Difference of the Points, *Cleonard* owns, theſe two Words are not always diſtinguiſhed by the Accents in the moſt accurate Authors, but is rather to be fetched from the Senſe. According to this, the Reading will be, *That their Right to the Tree of Life might be eſtabliſhed*; and then the plain Meaning is, He that doth his Will, or keepeth his Commandments, hath a ſure Evidence that he is eſtabliſhed in a State of *Communion* with Chriſt. I am ſure, this, tho' not the common, is the moſt eaſy Senſe of the Words.

2*d* Benefit, *And may enter in through the Gates into the City.* We had the Senſe of *Gates*, Chap. xxi. 12. and of the *City*, Chap. xxi. 2. Here indeed it is neither called *the holy City*, nor the *new Jeruſalem*; yet we cannot underſtand it of any other, unleſs (becauſe this is extended to the whole Prophecy) we apply it to the whole State of the Goſpel-church, from the Time *John* had this Viſion to the End; for tho' there will be a great Difference betwixt the laſt State of the Kingdom of Chriſt on Earth, and all the former Periods thereof, yet they will agree, as in the Manner of *Incorporation*, and the ſpiritual Privileges, ſo alſo in the great Quality, *Holineſs*. Nor need we trouble ourſelves, that a Right to the Tree of Life, is put before the Entring into the City, croſs to the Order we find, *Chap.* xxi. and in this Chapter, *v.* 2. for both Expreſſions contribute to ſhew that they will be introduced into the *City*, and, when there, be admitted to all the Privileges of its *Deniſons*: Nor yet, becauſe Chriſt is the Truth of both the *Tree of Life*, and the *Gates*, will there be any Room for *Criticiſing*; ſeeing he is the Sum and Subſtance of all the Bleſſings the Elect are capable of, and ſtand in Need of, in all States.

What we are to conſider here, is the Verb εἰσέλθωσι. This is the *third Perſon* of the *Plural Number* of the *ſecond Aoriſt*; and therefore, in the Senſe of the greateſt *Greciſts*, is to have the Signification of the *Preterit*: And thus, if ἵνα be put for ὅτι, as is very uſual, the Meaning is, *They are bleſſed becauſe they have entred through the Gates into the City.* And ſo the two Expreſſions are parallel, and ſhew they are to have a Retroſpect to the whole Prophecy, and can in no tolerable Senſe be meant of the future and eternal Condition of the Church, without doing the greateſt Violence to the *Conſtruction* of the Text. That there is a *Jump* from the *ſingular* to the *plural Number*, is what is moſt uſual in all Writers, when the *ſingular* is *collective*, or *an indefinite Particular*; for that may be expreſt, according to the Rules of all Languages, by either *Number*, and not vary the Senſe.

This affords a ſtrong Argument to conſider and improve the Words of this Prophecy, becauſe it diſcovers true Happineſs and Bliſs is only to be had by the Obſervation of the Commands and Doctrines contained therein: As alſo, it ſhews what will be the various State of the Church of God in all Ages, that we may be engaged to humour the Providence, and interprete the ſame by the Precept, and never caſt away our Confidence.

II. The next Way he eſtabliſheth this Topick, is from the Nature and State of theſe who do not keep his Commandments, *v.* 15. which is a plain Deſcription of *Babylon* or *Antichriſt*; where we very ſhortly are to view, 1. Their Nature. 2. Their State.

1. Their *Nature*, in ſeveral Characters, moſt whereof occurred before, as *Sorcerers*, *Murderers*, *Idolaters*, on *Chap.* ix. 21. and *Liars*, Chap. xxi. 27. and *Whoremongers* often. The only Thing that remains, is the Character, *Dogs*. Theſe were the moſt unclean Sort of Creatures under the Law, and were ſet upon the ſame Level with *the Hire of a Whore*, Deut. xxiii. 18. For the Price of neither could be brought into the Houſe of the Lord; which ſhews how hateful theſe might be to God, who come under this Deſignation. This is not to be taken here literally, but in a prophetick Senſe; and ſo the Meaning muſt be fetched from other Places of Scripture, which will caſt up in

theſe

theſe few Things, (1.) A Dog is an unreaſonable Creature; ſo *Hazael* ſaid to *Eliſha*, 2 Kings viii. 13. *Is thy Servant a Dog?* when the *Prophet* had foretold what he would do. (2.) They are impure, and uncleanly; for, 2 *Pet.* ii. 22. *He turneth to his own Vomit*; which ſays, that if at any Time they ſhould, by the Force of a *natural Conſcience*, diſgorge their Sin for their preſent Eaſe, they immediately return to the ſame. (3.) They make terrible Noiſe, and many a Time without Occaſion; ſo a frightful and unreaſonable Noiſe is compared to the Noiſe of a Dog, *Pſal.* lix. 6, 14. And *Shimei* is called a *Dog*, for his Noiſe againſt *David* in his Diſtreſs, 2 *Sam.* xvi. 9. So *Hereticks* are called *Dogs*, for the ſame Reaſon, *Philip.* iii. 2. *Beware of Dogs.* (4.) They are greedy, and ſo deſigned, *Iſa.* lvi. 11. where it expreſſeth the Nature of theſe Guides, who pretend to be *ſpiritual*, yet their whole Care is about *Temporals*, which they affect at any Rate. (5.) They are cruel, and bite: This Cruelty is compared to the bloody Sword, *Pſal.* xxii. 20. *Deliver my Soul from the Sword, my Darling from the Power of the Dog.* So that this Character diſcovers them to be a moſt wretched and abandoned Pack, Haters of God and his Ways, and no leſs hateful to good Men.

2 Their State, *they are without*, i. e. not admitted into the City, they have no Title or Right to the Tree of Life; for this is the very Reverſe of what we had in the former Verſe, and ſo we have a very graphical Deſcription of *Antichriſt* and his *Partizans*. This preſſeth the Conſideration of this Prophecy, that we may know to whom we belong: Theſe who do not, are indifferent about their State, driving only towards theſe Things that are ſenſible and ſenſual.

The third Part of the Concluſion is from *v.* 16. to the Cloſe, wherein we have the whole of this Prophecy, yea, and of the whole Scripture, guarded from Additions, or Alterations, or Mutilations, by ſeveral very ſtrong and awful Reaſons, 1. From the Authority of the Revealer, *v.* 16. 2. From ſeveral concurring Invitations, *v.* 17. 3. From heavy Certifications, *v.* 18, 19. 4. From the Promiſe of Chriſt, *v.* 20. 5. The Apoſtle's Invocation, *v.* 20.

16 I Jeſus have ſent mine Angel to teſtify unto you theſe Things in the Churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright and Morning-Star.

Here Chriſt fences this Prophecy by his own *Authority*, and the Progreſs of the Prophecy. It is not much different from what we have, *Chapter* i. 1. only there *John* ſpeaks the Word from *Chriſt*, and by his Authority; here he brings in Chriſt ſpeaking the ſame Words upon the Matter, and thereby homologates what *John* had ſaid before. In both it is ſaid, that *Jeſus ſent forth his Angel to ſignify theſe Things*, or, *Things which muſt ſhortly come to paſs*. Here it is ſomewhat more expreſs and authoritative than in the other; the Difference will caſt up as we go on. Here we have to conſider, 1. The Progreſs, as pointedly repreſented in the Text. 2. This Progreſs fortified from a glorious Deſcription of the great Author.

I. The Progreſs of this Prophecy, in theſe remarkable Steps, all which diſcover the Perfection of the Performance.

1*ſt* Step in theſe Words, *I Jeſus*. Chap. i. 1. it is called the *Revelation which God gave unto Jeſus*. We are not to think that God hath nothing to do here, for this *Jeſus* had declared himſelf to be God, *v.* 13. and renews it in this Verſe from the Characters of his Perſon: So that this Revelation is a notable Piece of his *prophetick Office*; for indeed he is *the Lord God of the holy Prophets*, v. 6. From this we have Reaſon to believe he hath made as full a Declaration of his Will as to Futurities, as in his infinite Wiſdom he found neceſſary and convenient, and conſequently there is no Need of Additions; and it would be highly impious to alter or diminiſh ought from it: He being the *great Prophet* of his Church, cannot, yea, will not bear with any that ſets up to teach other or mo Things than he has diſcovered here. He is that *Prophet*, of whom *Moſes* ſpoke, *Deut.* xviii. 15. *The Lord thy God ſhall raiſe up unto thee a Prophet from the Midſt of thy Brethren, like unto me; him ſhall ye hear. Peter* explains this, by adding, *Acts* iii. 23. *In all Things whatſoever he ſhall ſay unto you.* This both eſtabliſheth the *Truth* of the Prophecy, and preſſeth the *Obſervation* thereof, and further fences the ſame againſt all Invaſions whatſoever; eſpecially if we take in the Matter ſpoken of, *theſe Things*, which cannot be taken in another Senſe than what we had in *v.* 1. of this Book, *Things which muſt ſhortly come to paſs*, which, in the Mind of all, comprehend the whole Contents of this Prophecy.

2*d* Step is, *He* (*i. e.* Jesus) *sent his Angel to testify these Things*. Chap. i. 1. *He sent and signified by his Angel.* This properly signifies to represent by Signs and Emblems, to fix the Matter the deeper upon the Prophet's Imagination. The Use of the *Angel*, and his Relation to Christ, we heard somewhat of in the Beginning of this Prophecy: He is brought in in both Places to give Testimony to its Contents. If it should be enquired, Why an *Angel* was imployed in this Work? The Answer is easy, Because it was the Will and good Pleasure of the great Revealer: If we go further, we may add, An *Angel* was fitter for this Purpose than any other Creature, because of his Wisdom, Strength, Agility, &c. Further, God had honour'd *Angels*, in all the Steps of Man's *Redemption*, to minister unto Christ; as at his *Conception, Birth, Trial, Time of Temptation, Agony*, and *Resurrection*. And many a Time they were sent to the Apostles; and therefore, according to that common Method of the Divine Providence, when the Canon of the Scripture was to be finished, he is pleased to make Use of *them*. Besides which Reasons, I think we need seek no further.

3*d* Step, To whom the Angel brought these Things, *to you*, in the *Plural Number*; whereas, *Chap.* i. 1. it is said, *they were signified unto his Servant* John. Some incline to turn this into the Singular Number, *thee*, or, whether or not, to understand the *Apostle John*. The first is an intolerable Freedom with the Text, the other is unprecedented in Scripture, to take the *Plural* for the *Singular Number*. To carry us off both these, we have no more to do, but consider to whom this Prophecy was directed, *Chap.* i. 4, 11. by *John* in the one, and *our Lord* in the other: And if we knit the *Introduction* with the *Conclusion*, as seems most reasonable, then the Prophecy was sent to the *seven Churches*. It is true, it may be objected, This *Angel* did not appear to them, and testify to their Senses the Truth of these Things: Nor indeed was it needful, seeing they had so notable a Mean of Conveyance as the *Apostle John*, whose Credit was justly such with these Churches, that whatever he delivered, either immediately from his Master, or mediately by the Ministry of an Angel, they had the greatest Readiness to receive and comply with. And that the seven particular *Epistles* were directed by our *Lord* to the *seven Churches* by Name, as we saw, *Chap.* ii. and iii. it will be no hard Thing to believe the whole *Prophecy* was consigned to them, tho' there were no Appearance of any *Angel* immediately to them: It was sufficient the *Angel* discovered these Things from *Christ* to *John*, and this Report made by him to them. Hereby we are taught, these Manifestations were not made so much for the Sake of the *Apostle*, as of the *Churches*; It was for their Sakes he was dignified with such Discoveries, and therefore they were obliged to keep this Trust, and transmit these Things to After-Generations.

4*th* and *last* Step, *In the Churches*. There is much Noise made about the Signification of the *Preposition* ἐν*ι*. Some turn it *in*, after our Translation; And thus they think it is directed to the *Ministers* in their several Congregations, to which they should read the same, and make them to understand it. Others turn it *of*, or *concerning*; and thus they think it is for the *periodical Scheme*, and the Sense is, These Things concern the *seven Periods* of the *Church*. Others again take it to signify *for*, or *for the Behoof*, or *for the Sake of*. It is certain, a great many Scriptures may be given to fortify all these Significations of this little Word: Nor can I find any Rule to fix its proper Signification but the Context; for the Learned find it to have above Forty several Rendrings *in* and *out* of *Composition*, and it would be a most unprofitable Task to examine them all to find out how it is to be taken here. I think, the last, which is the most common, may take Place here, and the rather if we allow *you* to comprehend all the seven Churches; and so the Sense is, This *Prophecy* was committed to these *seven Churches*, for the *Behoof* and Instruction of *all* Churches to the End of the World. Hence we have a strong Argument pressing both its Observation and Preservation.

II. This Progress is fortified from the Description of the Author; in these,

1. *I am the Root and Offspring of* David. The first Part of this we had, *Chap.* v. *v.* 5. where was also explain'd the second. Some contend, γένος is wrong translated, and should be rendred, not *Offspring*, but of the *Kind of* David: And so they think the two Words, *Root* and *Offspring*, to be the same Thing; and affirm further, any Distinction betwixt them is purely precarious. I see not the Design of this, but it seems hard, two Words, so unlike in Sound and common Signification, should be identified without any Reason offered. It is very true, this Word is not rendred *Progenies* or Offspring in any other Place of Scripture; yet it is as true, we have it rendred *Kindred*, which is a Word much a-kin to what we have in our Translation, as *Acts* iv. 6. *As many as were of the Kindred of the high Priest*: But this in no tolerable Sense can be understood of the Root of the high Priest, or that Stem from which he sprung. The most ordinary Signification of the Word is *Nation*, and so the Meaning is, He is the Country man of *David*; and it has something of Relation in it: So the Apostle says, *Phil.* iii. 5. *Of the*

the Stock of Iſrael, which ſignifies not the Root, but One deſcended from the Root; which proves him to be related to *David*, and, being after him, to be deſcended from him, as is proven in the Goſpels, not in a collateral but direct Line. How he came alſo to be called the *Root of* David, in this Senſe, I ſee not, if we have not Recourſe to the Rules of *Herauldry*, by which they uſually deſign the Deſcendent from the firſt of the Family in a ſtraight Line, the *Root* of all the reſt, called *Cadets*, that have ſprung from the Family: Yet the wiſe Part of the World mock at this, as a notable Solyciſm in Language. I take the whole Import of this to be, *Chriſt* is the only *Mediator*, and, as ſuch, is both *God* and *Man*.

2. *I am the bright and Morning-Star.* This was explain'd on *Chap.* ii. 28. except the additional Adjunct, *bright*, which was alſo explain'd, *Chap.* xviii. 14. This *Star* was long promiſed before he appeared, to diſpel the Clouds of Heatheniſh and even Jewiſh Ceremonies. After his firſt Appearance there was a greater Darkneſs of *Popiſh* and *Mahometan* Deluſions, which have in Part already, and will afterwards fully evaniſh, when this *Morning-Star* puts on the Brightneſs of the *Sun of Righteouſneſs*. From this we have a full View of the Authority of the Author of this Prophecy, and conſequently what Reaſon we have to guard againſt all *Interpolations* thereof, and to believe it to be a Part of the infallible Word of God.

17 And the Spirit and the Bride ſay, Come. And let him that heareth ſay, Come. And let him that is athirſt, come. And whoſoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely.

The ſecond Argument, guarding this Prophecy, is from concurring Invitations; where the great Difficulty is, To whom theſe Calls are directed? Many ſay, To all the Hearers of the Goſpel, who are called to cloſe with Chriſt on his own Terms; as in the Cloſe of the Verſe, *Let him that is athirſt, come*, &c. This indeed is ſmooth, but does not ſatisfy what is the Connection, and how the Calls come in with this Part of the Concluſion. Some tell us, It is dropt in upon a Sentence interrupted in the Cloſe of *v.* 16. and begun again, *v.* 18. and ſo this Verſe is a Parentheſis in the Midſt of a compleat Sentence. I anſwer, According to the Rules of *Rhetorick*, all interjected Sentences ſhould contain ſomething relative to the Sentence it cuts, elſe it will but perplex the Purpoſe: Now, I preſume, to bring in theſe Callers to join with Chriſt in the Terms of Salvation, amidſt ſo many Arguments preſſing the Conſideration and Preſervation of this Prophecy, will be found ſcarcely agreeable to the Rules of ordinary Language, ſeeing there is no Connexion betwixt them. This is more than evident from the pitiful Shifts ſome take, of turning the *Indicative* ſometimes to an *Imperative*, ſometimes to an *Optative*; while others change the *Preſent* to the *Future*, and thereby make the whole either a Command or a Promiſe. I think therefore we had beſt let it run in the *Indicative* and *Preſent*, as it is in moſt Copies; and, for the reſt, to bring the Scope of it from the Context: And ſo we will find two Objects called, the One ſeems to be our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, by the three firſt Callers; the ſecond Object called, is the *Elect*, in the two laſt Clauſes. Whence it is plain, the *Callers* may be different; the firſt *three* are mentioned, and theſe call on Chriſt; and in the next two, we may allow Chriſt to be the other *Caller*: Yet it will break no Squares, tho' we allow the firſt three to call firſt upon Chriſt to come, and then to call upon the Elect to come to him. Any of theſe will be more agreeable to the Scope, than any Thing I have yet ſeen: We ſpeak of both,

I. I contend, Chriſt is called on by the firſt *three*. My Reaſons are, (1.) Chriſt had promiſed twice in this Concluſion *to come*, v. 7. & 12. On both, I ſhewed he was to come to perform, and bring about in the eſtabliſhed Order, all theſe great and notable Events contained in this Prophecy, which he had ordered to be publiſhed to the Churches, for their Comfort and Encouragement; and which, when known by them, do excite their fervent Deſires to him to haſten his March, and bring forth this ſo great and notable a Work. (2.) When our Lord has renewed the Promiſe of his Coming a third Time, *v.* 20. *Behold, I come quickly*; our Prophet ſubjoins in the next Words, *Even ſo, come, Lord Jeſus*: So that we are ſure the Act of Coming is four Times ſpoken of with Reſpect to Chriſt; *thrice* by *himſelf*, and *once* by the *Apoſtle*: And there is no Reaſon why the three Callers in the Beginning of the Verſe, may not be ſuppoſed to call on him alſo; more eſpecially that they are not in the Caſe of theſe called, in the other two Expreſſions, as will afterwards appear. This then is a moſt cogent Reaſon, preſſing the Conſideration of this Prophecy, and the Conſervation of it pure, as delivered by the Apoſtle *John*; becauſe the Implementing thereof is the conſtant Deſire of all. Here we are to conſider, 1, Who deſires. And, 2. What is deſired.

1. Who deſires. The two firſt are in the *Preſent* of the *Indicative*, the *third* is in the *Imperative*; which may be meant of all Believers in all Ages, moved by the firſt *two* to join them in this Exerciſe: It is not agreed, who the Callers are, and therefore we would conſider them particularly.

(1.) The *Spirit*. It is controverted who is meant thereby: Some make it to ſignify all the Faithful; but then they are obliged to make the *Spirit* and the *Bride* the ſame. Others by Spirit mean the *Spirit of Prayer*; which will be liable to the ſame Exceptions. Waving theſe then, and ſome other Thoughts, we would ſeek the Senſe thereof from ſome other Paſſages of this *Prophecy*, where the Word occurs; and ſo I apprehend the Signification of [*good*] Spirit (and this cannot be *evil*) may be reduced to one of theſe; either, 1. The *holy Spirit of God*, the *third Perſon* of the glorious *Trinity*: Or, 2. The *Spirit of Prophecy*. The *firſt* we have often, as, *Chap.* ii. 7. *What the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches*; and in all the *ſeven Epiſtles*, beſides ſeveral other Places. In the other it is expreſly, *Chap.* xix. 10. *The Teſtimony of Jeſus is the Spirit of Prophecy*; aud where we find the Apoſtle ſay, *He was in the Spirit*. I am pretty well aſſured, ſome of theſe muſt take Place here. Some have Difficulty about the *firſt*, for it ſeems to inſinuate at *impotent Deſire*, incompatible with the *eternal Spirit*: Yet I cannot perceive that; for, why may not the *holy Ghoſt* expreſs his Deſires of Chriſt's Coming, according to his Promiſe, without any Imperfection? But if that diſpleaſe, then let us take it for that ſpecial Gift of the Spirit, called the *Spirit of Prophecy*: I am ſure this is true, for it is the Breathings of that *Spirit* from the Beginning. Never *Prophet* but called to the *Redeemer to come*; and this Prophet, after their Example, does the ſame, *v.* 20. This ſeems to be the moſt eaſy and natural Senſe of the Word, eſpecially that we read of *the God of the holy Prophets*, v. 6. which ordered the Manifeſtation of theſe great Events.

(2.) *The Bride*. This was explained before, *Chap.* xxi. 2, 9. by this we are to mean the Church upon Earth: Theſe two are undoubtedly different; there is however a ſweet Agreement betwixt them, for the *Bride* tunes her Voice by the *Spirit* of Prophecy, and both chime the ſame Note.

(3.) *He that heareth*. This was explained, *Chap.* ii. 7. but here we are to diſtinguiſh it from the other *two*: And, to ſhift all other Senſes, I chooſe this, That it is to be meant of all *Believers* that ſhould ariſe in the World after the Date of this Prophecy. My Reaſon is, Becauſe it is not given as their preſent Practice, as in the others; for they were not then in Being: But it is recommended to them as their Duty, that as ſoon as they ſhould exiſt and be converted (for that is the Senſe of Hearing) then they are to join the reſt, and pray, after Chriſt's Pattern, *Thy Kingdom come*.

2. What all theſe three deſire, in one Word, *Come*; which is an hearty Acquieſcing in the Promiſe of Chriſt, *I come quickly*: So that neither leſs nor more can be in their Voices, than was in their Maſter's above exlained.

II. The next *Call* is in the two laſt Clauſes of the Text, which we are ſure is not directed to Chriſt; becauſe we have the *Perſons* called, *characterized*: Nor need we laborioufly to enquire after the *Caller*; It is generally owned to be the Call of Chriſt, and not immediately, but by the Goſpel. Tho' here in the *Viſion*, if we tye it to the firſt Clauſe of *v.* 16. *I Jeſus*, it ſeems to be immediate; yet that is not to be expected, nor is it any where promiſed. As before I conſidered the Callers, and the Call; ſo here I conſider the Called, and the Call.

1. The Perſons called, deſcribed by *two* Characters, (1.) *He that is athirſt*, explained, *Chap.* xxi. 6. and is a plain *Quotation* from *Iſaiah*, Chap. lv. 1. *Ho, every one that thirſteth*. *Thirſting* is an Affection proper to our Bodies, but many a Time transferr'd to the Soul, to ſignify a painful and uneaſy Senſe of Want, and a violent Inclination to what is only the proper Relief, which, in this Caſe, is *Jeſus Chriſt*. (2.) *Whoſoever will*. This is very *general* and comprehenſive; yet I ſee not how it can be *univerſal*, as ſome contend; for they muſt be *willing*, which every one has not at Hand, as our Lord teſtifies, *John* v. 40. *Ye will not come unto me*. Nor will a faint *Velleity* do the Matter, for the contrary is aſſerted, *Rom.* ix. 16. *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth Mercy*. This is plainly the Subſtance of that Direction, *Iſa.* lv. 3. *Incline your Ear, and come unto me; hear, and your Soul ſhall live*. And ſo we are to underſtand this of a converted Will, which is owing to the Grace of God, determining them to yield to the Call of the Goſpel.

This then is the *ancient Divinity* of the Prophets, and very inconſiſtent with the *Modern Divinity*, which makes all the Promiſes abſolute, and cut off all Conditions, even of *Faith*, *Repentance*, and *Holineſs*; as the *Marrow* expreſly does, Page 135. where, from this Text, it would prove, *We may take Chriſt without Thirſting*; which is quite croſs the Strain of the Word of God, which declares there can be no Will without

out this ſpiritual Appetite. Beſides, even allowing them all this, it will not prove the *Promiſes* to be *abſolute*; for here there muſt be a Willingneſs, which to be ſure is a Condition; elſe they muſt maintain, God will ſave them whether they will or not, and carry them to Heaven under all the unrepented Provocations they can be guilty of: An Opinion to be abhor'd by all ſober Perſons, yet an Inference their Principles do naturally give Ground for. As little will that other ſo much exalted Scripture ſerve their Turn, *Iſa.* xliv. 3. *I will pour Water upon them that is thirſty, and Floods upon the dry Ground*: For even the *dry Ground* ſuppoſes a Senſe of its chopt and withered Condition; if not, then it is to be ranged among theſe who ſee not their Need, and therefore, while in that State, are not capable of Salvation; for theſe are not in Chriſt's Commiſſion, as he ſays, *I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners, to Repentance.*

2. The Call; which we may well allow to be our Lord's, becauſe moſt agreeable to his Calls, *Mat.* xi. 28. *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden.* This Call is expreſſed by two Phraſes, 1. *Come*, or, *Let him come*, imperatively. We have the ſame by Chriſt, *John* vii. 37. *Jeſus ſtood and cried, If any Man thirſt, let him come unto me and drink.* So that *to come to Chriſt*, is by Faith to receive and reſt on him for Salvation, being deeply affected with the Senſe of our loſt and undone State. This is not a natural Act, but by the Divine Influence, *John* vi. 44. *No Man can come unto me, except the Father draw him.* 2. *Let him take the Water of Life freely*: This is the ſame in Subſtance with that, *Come ye to the Waters; and he that hath no Money, come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy Wine and Milk without Money, and without Price.* But of this before, *Chap.* xxi. 6.

From the whole, Chriſt ſeconds the Call of the *Spirit* and the *Bride*, &c. with very hearty and warm Calls to all ſenſible Sinners to come to him, while he is bringing about theſe great and wonderful Events, that they periſh not with the Wicked. Here alſo we have it plainly inculcate, there will be no other Sort of Calls to the End than theſe; And that they are of a Piece with the many and repeated *Calls* have been given by the *old Prophets*, and after that by *Chriſt* in Perſon, and by his *Apoſtles*.

We may alſo diſcover the Connection of this to be a *ſecond Reaſon* enforcing the improving and keeping pure this Prophecy, from ſeveral Topicks; (1.) From the Concordance thereof with the other Dictates of the Spirit of God: For the Spirit of Prophecy, that was in all the former Prophets, was alſo in the Penman of this Portion of Scripture; and from their Sayings we can moſt ſafely come to the Underſtanding of this. (2.) There is nothing in it which all the *Churches of God* did not cloſe with and approve, and they alſo moulded their Lives and Affections agreeable thereto. (3.) Becauſe the whole of the Goſpel-truths ſhine in a very eminent Manner therein, and that the Goſpel-church will be all of a Piece from firſt to laſt: We are not to expect *another* Goſpel, nor *another* Prophecy of the various States of the *Goſpel-church*, than what is here repreſented.

18 For I teſtify unto every Man that heareth the Words of the Prophecy of this Book, If any Man ſhall add unto theſe Things, God ſhall add unto him the Plagues that are written in this Book.

19 And if any Man ſhall take away from the Words of the Book of this Prophecy, God ſhall take away his Part out of the Book of Life, and out of the holy City, and from the Things which are written in this Book.

The next Way how this *Prophecy* is fenced againſt all *Invaſion*, is by two heavy Certifications againſt theſe who ſhall either *add to*, or *take from* the Words of the Prophecy. It is not agreed by whom theſe Words are uttered: Some think, by the Apoſtle *John*, becauſe, (1.) The Word, *I teſtify*, ſhould be rendered, *I give a joint Teſtimony*; and ſo they think it reſpects the Voices we had, *v.* 17. and that this is an additional Teſtimony to theſe. *Anſwer*, Tho' the Voices above-mentioned do indeed, as we have heard, guard this Prophecy, yet it is by a different Argument from what we have in this Text, and ſo we need not ſeek for an *accumulative* Evidence. I think alſo, with others, that this Verb, *I conteſtify*, may reſpect rather the Thing teſtified, than the former Teſtimonies; and ſo the Senſe of it is, that this *Prophecy* is of equal Divine Authority with the other Parts of *holy Writ*. And tho' the Teſtimony of the *holy Spirit* might have done this in the Mouth of an inſpired Writer, yet, in regard we have Chriſt unqueſtionably ſpeaking, *v.* 20. and deſigning himſelf *He which teſtifieth theſe Things*, we would alſo allow him to be ſpeaking here. (2.) Becauſe this Evidence men-

tions God in the third Perſon, which they think our Lord would not have done: But this is no unuſual Thing, even in this Prophecy, for Chriſt to ſpeak of God in the *third Perſon*, as we have it done three ſeveral Times, *Chap* ii. 11. and here it ſerves to give the more Weight to the Threatning, as we find a Promiſe greatned from this, that both the Father and Son concur therein, *John* xiv. 21. *He ſhall be loved of my Father, and I will love him.* We would further notice here, 1. To whom this Teſtimony is directed. 2. The Evils cautioned againſt. 3. The Certifications in caſe they ſhall be found.

I. To whom this Teſtimony is directed, *Every Man that heareth the Words of the Prophecy of this Book*, i. e. to all whom theſe Preſents may come; and ſo it is more extenſive than the *ſeven Churches*, yea, or all thoſe Churches which were then in the World: For it muſt be meant to extend to all Churches that *have been, are*, or *ſhall be* to the End of the World; and ſo ſpeaks to us, calling us to cloſs Attention.

II. The Evils cautioned againſt, which are two, 1. *If any Man ſhall add unto theſe Things*, i. e. immediately and directly to the Things contained in this Prophecy, and next unto the whole *Canon* of the Scripture. Some deny this, but without all Reaſon; for if the Conteſtification in the Beginning of the Verſe, put this Prophecy upon a Level with the reſt of the inſpired Writings, then this prohibites the adding to the other Parts of Scripture as well as to this: For the formal Reaſon why all Scripture is to be kept pure and intire, is becauſe they are of God's revealing, and ſtamped with his Authority. The Deſignation he gives this, and all the reſt of Scripture, is *theſe Things*, which is the ſame with *all theſe Things*, whether they be Matters of Faith, Rules of Life, Records of what is paſt, or Viſions and Revelations of what is to come. The Fact diſcharged is to *add to them*; which is not to be underſtood of the modeſt and ſober Enquirer, which was never forbidden concerning any Place of Scripture, but always commended, yea, and commanded, as we have heard above: Nor need we tell how great Benefits have accrued to the Chriſtian World by the Endeavours of the Learned and Serious this Way; yea, even while their Thoughts ſeem to claſh, Light has ſprung from their Diſſention, as does in Naturals from the Colliſion of Flint and Steel. That which I take to be wrapt up here, is,

(1.) An Inhibition to paum upon the World any new Revelation not contained in the Scripture. There is a vitious Itch in Mankind after the Knowledge of Things to come; and God has been pleaſed ſo far to condeſcend to this Inclination, as diſcover what he thought neceſſary, beyond which we are not to ſearch: And, were our Deſires confin'd thereto, we might hope in a ſhort Time to have a more full and clear Underſtanding thereof, than the Church has yet met with. This condemns all *Augurs* and *Spirits* of *Divination*, which the vaineſt Part of the World go in queſt of; and I think warrants us alſo not to look for the *Spirit of Prophecy* again in the Church, ſeeing this Prophecy ſhuts up the *Canon*: Yet this does not ſay but, in ſome minuter Circumſtances, God may diſcover to ſome of his choſen Servants that which he had before hid from others; But if this come not by the Word in the Hand of the Spirit, we have Reaſon to fear Deluſion, and even to ſuſpect the beſt when they follow another Method.

(2.) Here alſo our Lord diſcharges to fix wild and unſcriptural Senſes upon his Word; for the corrupt Thoughts of perverſe Men have done much Harm in the Chriſtian World, when they ſet oft their own Imaginations with this ſpecious Preface, *Thus ſaith the Lord*; and to bolſter up the Unlearned with the Experience of the Saints, which cannot be juſtified by the unalterable and unerring Word. *Therein* only we have what may quicken our Faith, direct our Expectations, and influence our Converſations; which Word if we leave in the leaſt, we are in hazard to be ſwallowed up of *Enthuſiaſm*. To this we have added the Extent of this Prohibition, *If any Man*, originally, *if any*, whether he be Man or Angel. Nor can we reſtrict this by any Clauſe in the preceeding Part of the Text, as that it ſhould be meant of *Men* only, becauſe the Caution is before directed to them that hear the Words of this Prophecy, for theſe are moſt in hazard to be deluded; and therefore the Apoſtle ſays, *Gal.* i. 8. *If we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Goſpel unto you than what we have preached, let him be accurſed.* Which we are not to underſtand as if *heavenly Angels* would obtrude falſe Viſions upon the Church, for that they are moſt averſe from; but becauſe *evil Angels* or Devils may transform themſelves into *Angels of Light*, as we know *Miniſters of Unrighteouſneſs* do appear many a Time in the Form of *Miniſters of Righteouſneſs*, in order to deceive; which they may the rather attempt, that we read of ſo many *Angels* appearing in this Book to the beloved Diſciple, and all are fond of Manifeſtations: So that this ſeems to ſay, No more ſuch extraordinary Diſcoveries are to be expected; which is a notable Rebuke to the Pretenders to Inſpiration, who, under

the

the plauſible Faints of Divine or infallible Direction, do, under many Shapes, overturn every Thing that is certain; and, by catching at Impreſſions on their own fervid Fancies, croſs the cleareſt Expreſſions of God's Will in his Word: A Miſery *Satan* now threatens us with, under mo Shapes than one, both at home and abroad; tho' in all of them, if we ſhould affirm the Hand of *Popiſh Joab* to be there, I fear it ſhould be in ſome, if not in many, Reſpects found to be true.

2. The next Evil cautioned againſt, is, *If any Man ſhall take away from the Words of the Book of this Prophecy.* The former does neceſſarily infer this; for, if the Crime be ſo great *to add*, it cannot be leſs *to take away.* The Deſign of the former Inhibition, ſerved againſt all the Creation, contains a Precept to preſerve the Scriptures *inviolate*; yet, for the more Solemnity, and to render the Contraveeners altogether unexcuſable, we have the other Side of the *Interdiction* advanced. There is ſome Difference in the Expreſſion of the Object; before it is called *the Words of the Prophecy of this Book*, here it is called *the Words of the Book of this Prophecy.* No doubt but the Terms are convertible, yet I think more is to be fetched from it than a dry Flower of *Rhetorick.* The two Expreſſions may point at both the Matter and Order of the Things revealed: As, *the Words of the Prophecy* declares the Things revealed, and *the Words of the Book* may comprehend the Order in which they are digeſted. If this hold, then there can be no Tranſpoſitions or Inverſions of the Order; which reproves ſome too guilty this Way. By *taking away*, we are certainly to underſtand the Reverſe of *adding*, in all the Parts thereof; and ſo we are diſcharged to diſmember the Scripture, or conceal, or pervert any Part of it, that may make againſt a darling Principle: A miſerable Shift ſome are driven to, eſpecially *Papiſts* and *Arians*, who, to ſupport their prophane and graceleſs Principles, tell us, Some Copies have not theſe Texts, or not in theſe Words, their Antagoniſts plead from.

III. The Certifications againſt the Evils, where found. Theſe are alſo two.

1ſt is againſt the firſt Prohibition of adding, *God ſhall add unto him the Plagues that are written in this Book.* Where we have to notice the Proportion betwixt their *Sin* and *Judgment*; ſo that, while they commit the one, they may read the other. Here we have, (1.) The Judgment, *The Plagues written in this Book.* Some think this to be meant of the *ſeven Vials*, but theſe are called only *the ſeven laſt Plagues.* 'Tis not ſaid *all the Plagues*; Yet it muſt be owned there will not be a few of them, ſeeing they are expreſſed ſo generally and indefinitely: Now, we know there are Plagues, temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal, mentioned therein; and here ſome of all of them are threatned. (2.) The Way of inflicting, *They ſhall be added.* Some think, this ſays none will be guilty of this, but theſe left of God, which is a very great great Plague, and that the After-plagues are the Puniſhment of theſe Sins they committed in that miſerable Condition; and ſo there is an Addition of ſome After-plagues to preceeding ones. Others ſay, All here is a beautiful *Antanaclaſis*, which in plain Language is a mere *Gingle of Words*: The other, conſidering it is the *Word of God*, is more eligible. (3.) The Author of theſe Plagues, *God*; which ſhews them to be certain, heavy, and inevitable. Hence we may infer how faithfully and carefully God ſuperintends the Revelation of his Will, and alſo the Reaſon why neither the *Devil* nor his *Agents* ſhall prevail againſt it.

2d *Certification* is againſt theſe who incur the Guilt of the ſecond Prohibition, *God ſhall take away his Part*, &c. Here, as in the other, the Juſtice of God will meet with their Sin: For, as they take away from the Word of God, either by curtailing it, or perverting its moſt obvious Senſe; God will cut them ſhort of all gracious Privileges in Time, and glorious Ones to all Eternity. There are *three* Branches of this Miſery, (1.) *God will take away his Part out of the Book of Life.* We explained Book of Life, *Chap.* iii. 5. *Chap.* xx. 15. For *taking away*, it muſt be underſtood the ſame Way as *blotting out*, Chap. iii. 5. where I ſhewed it cannot in any Senſe favour the *Pelagian* Hereſy. (2.) *Out of the holy City*, i. e. the *New Jeruſalem*, Chap. xxi. 2, 9. The Senſe we have by our Lord, *Mat.* v. 19. *He ſhall be counted leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven*; and ſo they ſhall be cut off from all theſe great and precious Promiſes made to the Subjects of that Kingdom. (3.) *From the Things that are written in this Book*; by which we are to mean this *Prophecy immediately*, and after that the *whole Word of God*, which is more extenſive than the other two, and comprehends all ſpoke of the *Bride the Lamb's Wife.* When the Judgments of this and the former Verſe are duly conſidered, the one will be found the Deſcription of a poſitive Miſery, and the other ſhews there will be a Privation of all Good.

20 He which teſtifieth theſe Things, ſaith, Surely I come quickly. Amen.——

This is the fourth Argument preſſing the *Preſervation* of this Prophecy, where we are to conſider,

1. The Speaker, *He which teſtifieth theſe Things*: Where the *Atteſter*, who is none elſe but our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, called *the faithful and true Witneſs*, Chap. i. 5. the Senſe of that may take Place. Then we have what he atteſts, *Theſe Things*; not only what we had in the preceeding two Verſes, or even the Whole of this Prophecy, but the whole Canon of the Scripture, as we heard above. Chriſt ſets his Seal to the Whole of it; ſo that this reſpects the whole prophetick Office of Chriſt, as exerciſed in the Word of Revelation, and binds the Church in all Ages to depend upon him for the Diſcovery of all edifying and ſaving Truth.

2. The Speech, *Surely I come quickly, Amen.* We explained at Length before the Promiſe, *I come quickly*: Here we have only to note the Confirmation he gives it, *Surely*, and *Amen*. This Apoſtle obſerves our Lord had two very *weighty* Aſſeverations, in all of his moſt weighty and neceſſary Doctrines, ναὶ, and ἀμὴν; both of which we have here, the one *prefixed*, and the other *annexed*. They are ſtrong Affirmatives, and deſigned to eſtabliſh our Faith in theſe Truths to which they are joined. I wave the Myſteries many fiſh out of them, as but ill-ſupported. As for the Propoſition, *I come quickly*, we have it uſed in all the three Parts of the Concluſion, which ſhews our Lord's Concern about them all.

20 — Even ſo, come, Lord Jeſus.

This is the laſt Argument engaging to preſerve the Words of this Book, and is the Words of the *Prophet*, who had ſhut up the other two Parts of the Concluſion, *v.* 8, and 14, 15. Here he takes the *Voice* of the *Spirit* and the *Bride*, *Come, Lord Jeſus*, with the additional Adverb ναὶ, *Even ſo*, Chriſt had uſed before him in this ſame Verſe. By this he ſhews his Knowledge of the Perſon, his Love to him, his Faith of what he is to do, the Greatneſs of the Events, and their Suitableneſs to the great Deſign of God, for his own Glory, and the Comfort and Benefit of his Church; in all which he moſt affectionately acquieſceth. This not only expreſſeth the inward and real Sentiments of his own Heart, but is laid down as a Rule to us, and all the Churches, to the End of the World.

21 The Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with you all. Amen.

This is the Concluſion of the whole Prophecy, and is the *Apoſtolick Benediction* to the *ſeven Churches*; the ſame with what the other *Apoſtles* have, both in the *Beginning* and *End* of their ſeveral *Epiſtles*; in the one it is a *Salutation*, and in the other a Chriſtian *Farewel-Bleſſing*. We explained it, *Chap.* i. 4. and he ſeals it, as they all do, with an *Amen*, explained before; and therefore, it only remains, we, after his Example, with the ſame *Frame* of *Spirit*, ſubjoin to the Whole of this *Prophecy*, and all the other *Scriptures*, our hearty

AMEN.

AN

AN

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